

CHARLESTON BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP

An Outline Of the Pāḷi Canon



Compiled from Various Sources by
Allan R. Bomhard



Intermediate Series

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CHARLESTON BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP
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Introduction

Tipiṭaka

The *Buddha* has passed away, but the sublime Teaching, which He expounded during His long and successful ministry and which He unreservedly bequeathed to humanity, still exists in its pristine purity.

Although the Master left no written records of His Teachings, His faithful disciples preserved them by committing them to memory and transmitting them orally from generation to generation.

Three months after the death of the *Buddha*, in the eighth year of King Ajātasattu's reign, five hundred pre-eminent *Arahants*, concerned with preserving the purity of the doctrine, held a convocation in Rājagaha to recite it. Venerable Ānanda Thera, the *Buddha*'s beloved attendant, who had the special privilege and honor of hearing the discourses from the *Buddha* Himself, and Venerable Upāli Thera, who was the most knowledgeable about the Disciplinary Rules, were chosen to answer questions about the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, respectively.

The First Council compiled and arranged the Teachings and the Disciplinary Rules in their present form, which are preserved intact in the Pāli *Tipiṭaka*.¹ The *Tipiṭaka* represents the entire body of the *Buddha*'s Teaching.

Two other Councils² of *Arahants* were held 100 years and 236 years later, respectively, again to recite the Word of the *Buddha*, because attempts were being made to pollute the pure Teaching.

About 83 BCE, during the reign of the pious Śri Lankan King Vaṭṭa Gāmaṇi Abhaya³ (104—77 BCE), a convocation of *Arahants* was held, and the *Tipiṭaka* was, for the first time in the history of Buddhism, committed to writing at Aluvihāra⁴ in Śri Lanka (Ceylon).

¹ Sanskrit *Tripiṭaka*. The word *Tipiṭaka* means “Three Baskets.” This designation is most likely derived from the practice of storing the texts in three baskets. The texts pertaining to the *Vinaya*, or Disciplinary Rules, were stored in one basket, the *Sutta* texts, or Discourses, were stored in a second basket, and the *Abhidhamma* texts, or Higher Teachings, were stored in a third basket.

² Details about these Councils are preserved in the *Mahāvamsa*, the “Great Chronicle” of Śri Lanka, which was composed around the sixth century CE.

³ King Vaṭṭa Gāmaṇi Abhaya ruled from 89—77 BCE. He is also known for the *stūpa* (Pāli *thūpa*) he had constructed in the capital, Anurādhapura. It is known as Abhayagiriya, and it measures 327 ft. in diameter at the base.

⁴ Aluvihāra is a hamlet in the interior of Śri Lanka about 24 miles from Kandy. This sacred rock temple is still a place of pilgrimage for the Buddhists of Śri Lanka. The *Buddhaghosuppatti*, a biography of the great commentator Buddhaghosa, states that the amount of books written on *ola* leaves, when piled up, would exceed the height of six elephants.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of those foresighted *Arahants*, there is no room, either now or in the future, for any group or individual to adulterate the pure Teachings of the *Buddha*.

Scope of This Book

In this book, only the canonical texts of the Pāli Canon will be discussed. In addition to these texts, there is a huge amount of commentarial and subcommentarial literature as well as many non-canonical works, including anthologies, cosmological texts, poetry, stories, chronicles, and letters and inscriptions. Among these are famous works such as the *Dīpavaṃsa* (“Chronicle of the Island” [Śri Lanka]), the *Mahāvamsa* (“Great Chronicle” [also of Śri Lanka]), the *Milindapañha* (“Milinda’s Questions”), the *Visuddhimagga* (“Path of Purification”), the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* (“A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma”), etc. ■

1

The Vinaya Piṭaka

Overview

The *Vinaya Piṭaka*, which is regarded as the sheet anchor of the Holy Order, deals mainly with the rules and regulations of the Order of *Bhikkhus* (Monks) and *Bhikkhunīs* (Nuns). For nearly twenty years after the Enlightenment of the *Buddha*, no definite rules were laid down for the control and discipline of the *Sangha* (Holy Order). Subsequently, as occasion arose, the *Buddha* promulgated rules for the discipline of the *Sangha*. The reasons for the promulgation of the rules, their various implications, and specific *Vinaya* ceremonies of the *Sangha* are fully described in the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. The history of the development of the *sāsana*⁵ from its very inception, a brief account of the life and ministry of the *Buddha*, and details of the first three Councils are some of the other material contained in the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Indirectly, the *Vinaya Piṭaka* reveals useful information about ancient Indian history, customs, arts, and sciences. One who reads the *Vinaya Piṭaka* cannot but be impressed by the democratic constitution of the *Sangha*, their holding of possessions in common, the exceptionally high moral standard of the *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunīs*, and the unsurpassed administrative abilities of the *Buddha*.

Textual Analysis⁶

The content of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* is by no means uniform, for, in addition to the disciplinary rules, there are also stories, partly of the *Jātaka* variety, even passages devoted to a description of meditative practices or other aspects of the *Dhamma*.

The purpose of the *Vinaya* is to regulate the life within the community (*Sangha*) of monks (*bhikkhu*) and nuns (*bhikkhunī*), as well as their relationship to lay people. These disciplinary rules may be divided broadly into two parts. The first part of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* contains the rules, which every single member of the *Sangha* is required to keep, and the second part is concerned with legal procedures. Thus, the first part refers to the individual members of the *Sangha*, and the second part to the *Sangha* as a whole.

⁵ *Sāsana*, literally, “message,” that is, the Buddhist religion, teachings, doctrines.

⁶ This section is adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 8—23.

The *Vibhanga* (also called *Suttavibhanga*) contains the *Pātimokkha*, together with an old Commentary on that text. It is divided into the *Mahāvibhanga*, “the great explanation,” or *Bhikkhuvibhanga*, “the explanation (of the rules) for *Bhikkhus*,” and the much shorter *Bhikkhunīvibhanga*, “the explanation (of the rules) for *Bhikkhunīs*.” Rules applicable to both monks and nuns are not repeated in the *Bhikkhunīvibhanga*.

The *Pātimokkha* contains the 227 disciplinary rules for *Bhikkhus* and the 331 rules for *Bhikkhunīs*. Every monk and nun is required to learn them by heart so that they can join in their recitation every fortnight on the *uposatha* days.

The *Pātimokkha* text is the only one that has come down to us embedded in a second one, that being its Commentary. However, manuscripts containing only the *Bhikkhu Pātimokkha* — rarely also the *Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha* — do exist. The separate existence of the *Pātimokkha* text seems to be guaranteed also by its Commentary, the *Kankhāvitaraṇī*.

The rules of the *Pātimokkha* are arranged in seven groups, to which an enumeration of seven different legal procedures elaborated in the *Khandhaka* has been added as the eighth part.

The legal structure of the *Pātimokkha* is clear. The rules are arranged in such a way that the severest offenses, the *pārājika* “major offenses,” are named first, and the lightest, the *sekkhiya* (also spelled *sekhiya*) “etiquette and decorum rules,” which relate only to good behavior in general are placed at the end. The textual structure, on the other hand, shows that the *Pātimokkha* must have developed over a certain period of time before it was shaped into its current form. Details of this process have never really been investigated.

By the end of the nineteenth century, it had already been observed in a study by H. Jacobi (1850—1937) that pre-Buddhist material had been incorporated into the *Pātimokkha*. At any rate, the basic rules, such as abstaining from killing (*ahimsā*), from sexual intercourse (*methunadhamma*), from stealing (*adinnādāna*), and from telling lies (*musāvāda*), are common to Brahmanical ascetics, Jains, and Buddhist monks and nuns.

The terminology, however, and the formulation of the rules differ, and Buddhists and Jains seem to be united as opposed to the Brahmins in using the terms *methuna(dhamma)* for sexual offenses and *pāṇātipāta* for killing living beings. The latter term did not make its way into the *Pātimokkha*, where the general rule of *ahimsā*, “harmlessness,” has been divided into two: only the killing of human beings constitutes the third *pārājika* (major offenses) offense, while hurting other beings is mentioned only in the eleventh *pācittiya* (minor offenses) offense. In the same way, it is striking that telling a lie is not a *pārājika* offense.

The *pārājika* rules begin by *yo pana bhikkhu ...* “if any monk ...” and thus use a frequent wording typical for both Buddhists and Jains, but, once again, unknown in Brahmanical texts. With the exception of the *sekkhiya* rules, which do not seem to have originally been part of the *Pātimokkha*, about two-thirds of the rules begin in such a way. This is especially true for all four *pārājika* rules, which can, consequently, be recognized as reformulated, although their content is by no means exclusively Buddhist, with the exception of the fourth *pārājika* rule on falsely boasting of supernormal powers.

At the same time, the very circumstantial formulation of the second *pārājika* rule on theft (stealing) or the third rule on taking a human life or inducing another to commit suicide shows that the *Buddha* aimed at a very precise juridical definition of what theft and murder really meant, something quite new in the development of Indian thought.

Other rules are formulated in a much simpler way, such as the first *pācittiya* rule: *sampajānamusāvade pācittiyaṃ* “if there is a conscious lie, an expiation (is necessary).” Rules of this type are rare, only about 10% out of the old *Pātimokkha* of about 150 rules. All these rules are found in the *pācittiya* section, and always at the beginning of a group of ten rules. At the same time, these brief rules, which link the *Pātimokkha* to the five precepts (*pañca-sīla*) and to the ten precepts (*dasa-sīla*), are the only ones in the *Pātimokkha* that may be regarded as true *suttas*. Thus, we find here an important clue concerning the genesis of the *Pātimokkha*.

Both the long sections of the *Pātimokkha*, the thirty *nissaggiyā pācittiya* rules and the ninety-two *pācittiya* rules are subdivided into groups of ten. Within these groups, single rules are often connected by concatenation in such a way that certain keywords occur in a sequence of rules.

The structure of the *Vibhanga* (*Suttavibhanga*) is determined by the sequence of rules in the *Pātimokkha* upon which it comments. Every single rule is embedded in a text that begins with an introductory story (*vatthu*) describing the occasion on which the rule was prescribed by the *Buddha*. Then follows the rule as such (*paññatti*), which may be supplemented with additional conditions (*anupaññatti*), and which is accompanied by a word-for-word explanation (*padabhājanīya*). Finally, exceptions to the rule (*anāpatti* “no offense”) are enumerated. Sometimes, there is a further paragraph containing, as examples, cases assumed to have been solved by the *Buddha* (*vinītavattu*), meant to give guidance to later *Vinaya* experts.

The introductory story does not always really suit the rule. In some cases, those monks who created them obviously misunderstood the relevant rule of the *Pātimokkha*. Thus, it is not as astonishing as it may seem, because many rules, such as the sixth and seventh *sanghādisesa* rules concerning the construction of very small monasteries, were outdated very early on, no longer applied, and their meaning forgotten. It is therefore evident that these stories are separated from the rules by a considerable period of time.

Although some introductory stories have been derived from the rules themselves, others reoccur in different parts of the Canon. Thus, the introduction to the first *pārājika* rule runs parallel to the Raṭṭhapāla Sutta, *Majjhima Nikāya*, no. 82. Here, the *Vinaya Piṭaka* seems to have preserved the older version. On the other hand, the introduction to the eighty-third *pācittiya* rule evidently quotes from the *Dasakanipāta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*. Sometimes, parallels to these stories are found in the *Jātakas*, or even in the *Vinayas* of other schools.

It seems that the Commentary on the rules is roughly contemporaneous with the introduction. The *anāpatti* formulas, however, seem to be still younger. Moreover, this part of the *Vibhanga* is missing in the texts of several other *Vinaya* schools.

From the point of view of Buddhist law, the introductions are unnecessary. Perhaps their existence can be explained by a certain parallelism with the *Mahāvagga*,

where rules laid down are related to the career of the *Buddha*, beginning with His Enlightenment.

In the same way, the *Vibhanga* begins with a text describing this event, which is different from the version found in the *Mahāvagga*. The text used in the *Vibhanga* has been borrowed from the *Aṭṭhakanipāta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*. Then, the magical powers of Moggallāna are mentioned, and, finally, Sāriputta, worrying about the duration of the *Dhamma*, asks the *Buddha* why the teaching of some former *Buddhas* did not last for a long period of time. This is the true beginning of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, because the *Buddha* reassures Sāriputta that He will prescribe rules as soon as a monk does something wrong.

This interesting remark shows that the compiler(s)/editor(s) who created the *Vibhanga* must have been well aware of the fact that the rules of the *Pātimokkha* are not arranged chronologically but, rather, systematically. For the first offender actually is Upasena Vangaputta, and not Sudinna, whose breach of chastity is the reason for prescribing the first *pārājika* rule.

Perhaps it is only by chance that Moggallāna and Sāriputta are mentioned here, for the first rules are laid down in the *Mahāvagga* only after Moggallāna and Sāriputta had become followers of the *Buddha*. Further, in the *Vibhanga*, the *Buddha* first visits Benares without any obvious reason before He meets Sudinna in Vesālī, who is the first monk to commit a breach of chastity. Again, the *Buddha* is near Benares to deliver His first sermon at Sarnath as described in the *Mahāvagga*.

The intention to build a general introduction to the *Vibhanga*, which runs parallel to the one of the *Mahāvagga*, may have been the reason why the original introduction was replaced. For, while the connecting texts necessary for the recitation of the *Pātimokkha* have been incorporated into the *Vibhanga*, the general introduction to the recitation still found in the *Pātimokkha* manuscripts has disappeared altogether from the *Vibhanga*, but it is still preserved in the *Mahāvagga*, where it is even provided with a Commentary. Commentaries as part of the text, on the other hand, are typical for the *Vibhanga*, but not for the *Khandhaka*, where this is a unique instance. This Commentary ends with a reference to the *jhānas*, which still are the main subject of the general introduction to the *Vibhanga*. Thus, it may be conjectured that some form of the original introduction to the *Vibhanga* perhaps survives in the *Khandhaka*.

The *Bhikkhunī Vibhanga* is built on the model of the *Mahāvibhanga*. It is found only rarely as a separate text in the manuscripts, because it had been out of use for centuries.⁷

While the *Vibhanga* has grown around the *Pātimokkha*, another important set of rules is found, though not systematically arranged, in the *Khandhaka*. These are the *kammavācā*,⁸ which exist as separate texts in an extremely broad manuscript tradition. These rules have to be recited in different legal procedures of the *Sangha*, such as the ordination of monks. An edition of the existing manuscripts, which contains differing

⁷ The Order of Nuns (*Bhikkhunīs*) was reestablished in the Theravādin tradition in 1996.

⁸ Sanskrit *karmavākya*.

sets of *kammavācā*, as well as a collection of these rules found in the *Vinaya Pīṭaka* and its Commentary, the *Samantapāsādikā*, is badly needed.

The name *Khandhaka*, which is typical for Theravādin Buddhism, means “mass, multitude” and is used in the names for the twenty-two chapters of this part of the *Vinaya Pīṭaka*. Only rarely are these chapters called by other names, such as *campeyyake vinayavatthusmiṃ*. Such terminology, however, is common in other *Vinaya* schools: for example, the Mūlasarvāstivādins use *vinayavastu*, and the Mahāsaṅghikalokottaravādins use *poṣadhapratisaṃyukta*.

The *Khandhaka* is divided into two parts: (1) *Mahāvagga* “great division” and (2) *Cullavagga* (or *Cūlavagga*) “small division.” The *Mahāvagga* contains ten, and the *Cullavagga* twelve, *Khandhakas*. Since the last two *Khandhakas* of the *Cullavagga* give the accounts of the first two Councils, these may be later supplements to a *Khandhaka* being divided into decades, just as, for example, the *nissaggiya* and *pācittiya* sections of the *Vibhanga*.

The basic structure of the *Khandhaka* is as follows: The *Mahāvagga* begins with an account of the Enlightenment of the *Buddha*, which is the starting point for the foundation of the Buddhist Order soon afterwards, and with the relevant rules for the ordination of monks. At the end of the *Cullavagga*, the account of the second Council held at Vesālī⁹ refers to the origins of the Theravādins. This historical narrative holds the text together as a bracket. After having presented the lower (*pabbajjā*) and higher (*upasampadā*) ordination, in I. *Mahākkhandhaka*, the II.—IV. *Khandhaka* describe the procedures connected to important events of the ecclesiastical year. Other chapters contain highly technical legal matters such as I. *Kaṭhinakkhandhaka* on robes or IX. *Campeyyakkhandhaka* on different procedures. This continues in the first four chapters of the *Cullavagga*. The chapter, which was, perhaps, originally the last one, is that devoted to the foundation of the Order of *Bhikkhunīs*: X. *Bhikkhunikkhandhaka*. This, again, runs parallel to the *Vibhanga*, which ends with the *Bhikkhunīvibhanga*.

The model for the *Khandhaka* seems ultimately to reside in the *Brāhmaṇas*.¹⁰ Just as the rules for the Vedic ritual sacrifices are not simply enumerated there but also explained, the Buddhist *Vinaya*, too, gives explanations as to why the rules had to be prescribed. The Buddhists, though, went far beyond the simple structure of small *Brāhmaṇa* texts when they assembled their laws and created the *Vinaya*.

⁹ Sanskrit *Vaiśālī*.

¹⁰ Any of a number of prose commentaries attached to the *Vedas*, the most ancient Hindu sacred literature, explaining the significance of the *Vedas* as used in the ritual sacrifices and the symbolic significance of the priests' actions. The *Brāhmaṇas* belong to the period 900—700 BCE, when the gathering of the sacred hymns into *Samhitās* (“collections”) had acquired a position of sanctity. They present a digest of accumulated teachings, illustrated by myth and legend, on various matters of ritual and on hidden meanings of the sacred texts. Their principal concern is with the sacrifice, and they are the oldest extant sources for the history of Indian ritual. Appended to the *Brāhmaṇas* are chapters written in similar language and style, but with a more philosophic content, which specifically instruct that the matter of these chapters should be taught only in the forest, away from the village. These later works, called *Āraṇyakas* (literally, “belonging to the forest”), served as a link between the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upanishads*. (This footnote is taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.)

If the collection of *suttas* in the *Sutta Piṭaka* is compared to the *Vinaya*, there is hardly any trace of a systematic order. Each discourse is a unit of its own, very often without any recognizable connection to the previous or to the following ones.

It is, however, not only in regard to the systematic arrangement that the *Vinaya* differs from the *sutta* collection. Even at first glance, it is striking that the stereotypical beginning of a *sutta*¹¹ is alien to the *Vinaya*, where texts begin with “at that particular time, the *Buddha* stayed at ...” This difference has not escaped the attention of the Commentaries. They explain the expression “at that particular time” as referring to the time when a certain rule was prescribed.

The difficulty remains, however, why the *Vibhanga* and the *Khandhaka* begin in this way, where a reference to a rule is excluded. The Commentary has no answer: “it is traditionally like this.” This situation could be explained as follows: The compiler(s)/editor(s) of the *Khandhaka* wanted to avoid the traditional beginning of the *suttas*, because they were consciously creating a new text as a whole, which was not a mere collection of many single texts, such as the individual *suttas*. If this is true, then it was obvious to leave out the stereotypical beginning of the *sutta* in question and to begin with the next sentence.

As in the *Vibhanga*, in the *Khandhaka*, too, texts are found that have been taken over from the earlier *Sutta Piṭaka*. It is interesting to note that, in these cases, the beginning of the text has been adjusted to the new context: as mentioned above, the stereotypical introduction has been dropped to fit the text into the *Vinaya*. These parallel texts, which are still in need of a detailed investigation, are as important for the relative dating of texts as for the structure of the individual chapters of the *Khandhaka*.

Moreover, parallels are found within the *Vinaya* itself. A paragraph important in this respect is the conversion of the three Kassapa brothers by the *Buddha*, *Vinaya* I 24, 10—25, 37, where the same event is told first in prose and then again in *āryā*-verses. The whole paragraph was discussed in detail by L. Alsdorf (1904—1978), who drew attention to the fact that the use of the *āryā*-meter can be used for dating texts. For this particular meter was only in use in India, and not in Ceylon (Śri Lanka). Consequently, if the tradition that Mahinda brought texts from India to Ceylon is correct, this text must be older than about 250 BCE. At the same time, this sequence of prose and verse corresponds to a type of literature found in the *Jātakas*.

Besides material relating to Buddhist law, even the Theravādin *Vinaya* contains quite a few stories. In the course of the development of *Vinaya* texts, more and more stories were incorporated, so much so that, for example, *Cullavagga* VII. *Sanghabhedak-khandhaka* “chapter on splitting the Order (schism),” which comprises twenty-six printed pages in the Theravādin version has been expanded into more than five hundred pages in the Mūlasarvāstavādin *Vinaya*. Thus, the law texts became slowly overgrown with

¹¹ Every *sutta* begins with the words: *Evam me sutam. Ekaṃ samayam bhagavā ... viharati ...* “Thus have I heard. At one time, the *Buddha* ... was staying (at) ...”

stories, to such an extent that there is almost a change of the literary genre, from law book to *Avadāna*.¹²

Both the *Vibhanga* and *Khandhaka* have a long history of development and mutual influence. The oldest part of the *Vibhanga*, the *Pātimokkha*, is separated by a considerable span of time from later ones, such as the *anāpatti*-formulas, which mention the *Abhidhamma* texts, and perhaps even script.

A preliminary model of the development of the *Vibhanga* and *Khandhaka* may be sketched as follows: First, the *Pātimokkha* was created by incorporating older, pre-Buddhist material, mostly by reformulating the rules, into the Buddhist material and by providing the framework necessary for recitation that is the introduction to the individual rules and the connecting texts between the groups of rules. Then, a Commentary on this text was developed, part of which survives in the *Mahāvagga*. Perhaps roughly contemporary is a first draft of the *Khandhaka*, possibly having only ten chapters,¹³ by which the growing *Vibhanga* is influenced. Next to be developed were the introductory stories, which do not always understand the rules correctly. This points to a certain distance in time between these two parts of the *Vibhanga*. Here, it is important to note that there is no such misunderstanding in the *Khandhaka*, because the compiler(s)/editor(s) could drop rules that were no longer understood, which was not possible in the fixed *Pātimokkha*. At this point, there may have been a revision of the *Khandhaka*, to which the highly technical and later (?) legal chapters were added and, thus, the number of twenty chapters was reached. The original introduction to the *Vibhanga* was replaced and brought into the *Mahāvagga*. Finally, the accounts of the Councils may have been added as an appendix. In particular, the account of the Second Council may have originally belonged to a non-Theravādin tradition, although no actual split of the Theravādin tradition is mentioned therein. This seems to be indicated by the fact that the terminology used in the account differs from what is common in the Theravādin tradition: formulations such as *kappati ... singilonakappo* (*Vinaya* II 306, 13) are otherwise alien to the language of the Theravādin *Vinaya*, but are astonishingly close to the language of the Jain *Kappasutta*. Furthermore, the monks obviously do not understand all the key words, which are unknown or at least unfamiliar to them, with the exception of the last two: the Theravādin *Vinaya* experts have to ask for an explanation for eight out of the ten items.

Even if this first and very much conjectural outline of a possible development is, on the whole, not too far from the truth, it would be difficult to convert this relative into an absolute chronology. Only in very general terms might it be conjectured that most, if

¹² Legendary material centering on the *Buddha*'s explanations of events by a person's worthy deeds in a previous life. The Pāli cognate of the term is *Apadāna*. *Avadāna* designates both the class of such stories scattered within the *Vinaya Pīṭaka* and separate collections based upon them. Among the latter is an important anthology of the Sarvāstivādin ("Doctrine That All Is Real") School given the modern title *Divyāvadāna* ("Divine *Avadāna*"), consisting of thirty-eight legends, including some about the great Buddhist emperor Aśoka (Pāli Asoka). The most famous and largest work classified as *Avadāna* is the *Mahāvastu* ("Great Story"), a compilation from the Mahāsaṅghika ("Great Community") School of ancient Buddhism of miraculous events in the life and former lives of the *Buddha* himself. (This footnote is taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.)

¹³ Cf. the *Daśadhyaya*- (perhaps rather *Daśabhāṇavāra*- ??) *Vinaya* of the Sarvāstivādins.

not all, of this happened before the *Vinaya* was brought to Śrī Lanka, inasmuch as there are no hints concerning additions to the *Vibhanga* or *Khandhaka* that refer to the island.

Although other *Vinaya* schools possess appendices to their *Vinayas*, a handbook giving a systematic survey of law exists only in the Theravādin *Vinaya*. The *Parivāra* (*Vinaya* V) is a highly technical text that has been put together from parts originally quite independent from each other and that sometimes even repeat the discussion of some *Vinaya* problems. The text concentrates on legal matters, leaving aside all framework. At the end, the author, or perhaps editor, named Dīpa, is mentioned, who is not otherwise known. The translation of the title is not entirely clear, perhaps “appendix” comes the closest; it occurs in the text itself.

The *Parivāra* consists of nineteen chapters, but, in the Commentaries, it is called *soḷasaparivāra* “appendix of sixteen (chapters).” Further, some manuscripts state at the end of the fourteenth chapter that “the *Parivāra* has come to an end” (*Vinaya* V 179, 19). There is, indeed, a rather clear break in the *Parivāra* after this chapter, because XV. *Upālīpañcaka* reads like a text from the *Khandhaka* beginning with *tena samayena ...*, (*Vinaya* V 180, 2). However, the structure of the *Parivāra* has never been investigated, and, therefore, the supposed original end of the text after XIV. *Kaṭṭhinabheda* remains an open question. In addition, there is no trace of a *Parivāra* with sixteen chapters. It is only in the phrases *mahāvibhange mahābhede soḷasa mahāvārā* (*Vinaya* V 53, 16) and *bhikkhunīvibhange soḷasa mahābheda* (*Vinaya* V 84, 34), at the end of the first two chapters, that the number sixteen (*soḷasa*) occurs. In spite of the fact that we find *vāra* here and not *Parivāra*, it is possible that the text has been named after the first chapters.

As we have it, the *Parivāra* presupposes both the *Vibhanga* and the *Khandhaka*, from which it is totally different in style. The text begins with questions and answers without mentioning the *Buddha* or any other person. One of the questions, concerning the tradition of the *Vinaya*, is most important for the history of this text. A line of forty persons, beginning with the *Buddha* and Venerable Upālī, is mentioned, enumerating prominent *Vinaya* teachers (*Vinaya* V 2, 36—3, 30). The last in the line is Venerable Sīvatthera, who may have lived in the first century CE, and this is most probably the *terminus post quem* for the *Parivāra*.

Traditionally, there were three Theravādin fraternities in Anurādhapura¹⁴ in Śrī Lanka based in three monasteries, each of which once possessed texts of their own.

¹⁴ Anurādhapura is a city located north-central Śrī Lanka (Ceylon). It is situated along the Aruvi Aru River. The old section of Anurādhapura, now preserved as an archaeological park, is the best known of Śrī Lanka’s ancient ruined cities; in the immediate vicinity are huge bell-shaped *dagobas* (Buddhist commemorative shrines, or *stūpas*) built of small sun-dried bricks, as well as temples, sculptures, palaces, and ancient drinking-water reservoirs. The city also contains an ancient pipal tree that is believed to have originally been a branch of the *bodhi*-tree at Bodhgayā, under the shade of which the Ascetic Gotama attained Enlightenment. The *bodhi*-tree branch was planted at Anurādhapura about 245 BCE, and it may be the oldest tree in existence of which there is any historical record.

Anurādhapura was founded in the 5th century BCE and was the Sinhalese capital of Śrī Lanka from the 4th century BCE until the 11th century CE, when invasions from South India forced the shifting of the capital. The city was abandoned and overrun by jungle; in the 19th century, it was rediscovered by the British, and it became a Buddhist pilgrimage center. The revival of the city began in earnest in the 1870s.

When King Parakkhamabāhu I (1153—1186) reformed Buddhism in Śrī Lanka during the twelfth century, the monks of the Abhayagirivihāra and Jetavanavihāra were reordained according to the Mahāvihāra tradition. Consequently, their texts gradually disappeared, and the only Theravādin texts surviving are those of one monastery, the Mahāvihāra.

It is known that the *Vinaya* of the Abhayagirivihāra differed from that of the Mahāvihāra, particularly the *Khandhaka* and *Parivāra*, as explicitly stated in the Commentary to the *Mahāvamsa*. Fortunately, this is corroborated by a single sentence from the Abhayagiri *Vinaya*, corresponding to *Vinaya* II 79, 21 = III 163, 1, quoted in the *Vinaya* Commentary, which shows that the wording was, indeed, slightly different.

Synopsis¹⁵

The *Vinaya Pīṭaka* has three major divisions: (1) *Vibhanga*, (2) *Khandhaka*, and (3) *Parivāra*. The *Vibhanga* is further divided into two parts: (1) *Pārājikā* and (2) *Pācittiya*. Likewise, the *Khandhaka* consists of two parts: (1) *Mahāvagga* and (2) *Cullavagga* (or *Cūlavagga*). The *Parivāra* is a later addition — it summarizes the whole of the *Vinaya*.

1. <i>Pārājikā</i>	(Major Offenses)	}	<i>Vibhanga</i>
2. <i>Pācittiya</i>	(Minor Offenses)		
3. <i>Mahāvagga</i>	(Greater Section)	}	<i>Khandhaka</i>
4. <i>Cullavagga</i>	(Lesser Section)		
5. <i>Parivāra</i>	(Epitome of the <i>Vinaya</i>)		

As noted above, the *Vibhanga* enumerates the 227 disciplinary rules (*Pātimokkha*) for *Bhikkhus*. These rules are arranged into eight categories:

1. Four rules leading to expulsion from the Order if broken (*pārājikā*):
 - a. Sexual intercourse;
 - b. Theft;
 - c. Taking a human life or inducing another to commit suicide;
 - d. Falsely boasting of supernormal powers.
2. Thirteen rules dealing with initial and subsequent meetings of the *Sangha* (*sanghādisesā*);
3. Two indefinite rules (*aniyatā*);
4. Thirty rules dealing with expiation and forfeiture (*nissaggiyā pācittiya*);

The contemporary city, much of which was moved during the mid-20th century to preserve the site of the ancient capital, is a major road junction of northern Śrī Lanka and lies along a railway line. The headquarters of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon is in Anurādhapura. Population (1990 est.): 37,000. (This footnote is taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.)

¹⁵ This synopsis is adapted from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Śrī Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]).

5. Ninety-two rules dealing with expiation (*pācittiyā*);
6. Four rules requiring confession (*pāṭidesanīyā*);
7. Seventy-five rules dealing with etiquette and decorum (*sekhiyā*);
8. Seven rules for the settlement of legal processes (*adhikaraṇasamathā*).

These rules are followed by those for *Bhikkhunīs* (*Bhikkhunī Vibhanga*).

The *Khandhaka* is divided into the *Mahāvagga* (Greater Section) and the *Cullavagga* (Lesser Section — this is also called the *Cūlavagga*):

I. *Mahāvagga*:

1. Rules for admission to the Order;
2. The *uposatha*¹⁶ meeting and the reciting of the *Pātimokkha*¹⁷ (Disciplinary Rules);
3. Retreat during the rainy season (*vassāna*);
4. Ceremony concluding the rainy season retreat (*pavāraṇā*);
5. Rules regarding articles of dress and furniture;
6. The procedures for the annual making and distribution of robes (*kaṭhina*);
7. Rules regarding sick *Bhikkhus*, sleeping, and robe material;
8. The way of conducting meetings by the Order;
9. Proceedings in case of schism.

II. *Cullavagga* (*Cūlavagga*):

1. Rules for dealing with offences that are brought before the Order;
2. Procedures for putting a *Bhikkhu* on probation;
3. Rules for dealing with the accumulation of offences by a *Bhikkhu*;
4. Rules for settling legal procedures in the Order;
5. Miscellaneous rules for bathing, dress, etc.;
6. Dwellings, furniture, lodging, etc.;
7. Schisms;
8. Different classes of *Bhikkhus* and the duties of teachers and novices (*sāmaṇeras*);
9. Exclusion from the *Pātimokkha*;
10. The ordination and instruction of *Bhikkhunīs*;
11. Account of the First Council at Rājagaha;
12. Account of the Second Council at Vesālī.

¹⁶ Literally, “fasting,” that is, “fasting day,” is the full-moon day, the new-moon day, and the two days of the first and last moon quarters. On full-moon and new-moon days, the Disciplinary Code (*Pātimokkha*) is read before the assembled community (*Sangha*) of monks (*Bhikkhus*), while on the four *uposatha* days, many lay devotees go to visit the monasteries, taking upon themselves the observance of the eight precepts (*aṭṭha-sīla*). Cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), p. 219.

¹⁷ Sanskrit *prātimokṣa*.

The last division is the *Parivāra*, which summarizes and classifies the *Vinaya* rules for instruction and examination purposes. ■

2

The Sutta Piṭaka

Introduction

The *Sutta Piṭaka* consists chiefly of instructive discourses delivered by the *Buddha* to both the *Sangha* and the laity on various occasions. A few discourses expounded by Venerable Sāriputta, Venerable Moggallāna, and Venerable Ānanda are incorporated and are accorded as much veneration as the Word of the *Buddha* Himself, since they were approved by Him. Most of the discourses were intended for the benefit of *Bhikkhus*, and they deal with the Holy Life and with the exposition of the Doctrine. There are several other discourses that deal with both the material and moral progress of lay followers. The *Sigālovāda Sutta*,¹⁸ for instance, deals mainly with the duties of a lay person. There are also a few interesting discourses delivered to children.

The *Sutta Piṭaka* may be compared with a book of prescriptions, since the discourses were expounded on diverse occasions to suit the temperaments of various persons. There may be seemingly contradictory statements in some of the discourses, but they should not be misconstrued, inasmuch as they were uttered by the *Buddha* to suit a particular purpose; for instance, when asked the same question by different people on different occasions, He would either maintain silence when the inquirer was merely foolishly inquisitive, or He would give a detailed reply when He knew that the inquirer was an earnest seeker after the Truth, and He would tailor the reply to fit the intellectual ability and spiritual awareness of the inquirer.

The *Sutta Piṭaka* consists of the following five *Nikāyas* (Collections):¹⁹

¹⁸ *Dīgha Nikāya*, Pāṭikavagga, *Sigālovāda Sutta*, no. 31.

¹⁹ The descriptions of the works that make up the *Sutta Piṭaka* are taken, in part, from Sangharakshita, *The Eternal Legacy: An Introduction to the Canonical Literature of Buddhism* (London: Tharpa [1985]) and, in part, from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]). The following works have also been consulted: Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]); Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications [hardcover edition 1995]); Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications [second edition 2001]); Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications [2000]); Nyanaponika Thera

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>Dīgha Nikāya</i> | (Long Discourses) |
| 2. <i>Majjhima Nikāya</i> | (Middle-length Discourses) |
| 3. <i>Saṃyutta Nikāya</i> | (Kindred Sayings) |
| 4. <i>Anguttara Nikāya</i> | (Numerical Sayings) |
| 5. <i>Khuddaka Nikāya</i> | (Smaller Collection) |

Dīgha Nikāya

Overview

The *Dīgha Nikāya* (Long Discourses), which contains some of the oldest records of the historical *Buddha*’s (The Buddha Sākyamuni²⁰) original teachings, given in India some 2,600 years ago, consists of 34 longer-length *suttas*, or discourses, arranged in three sections (*vagga*): (1) *Sīlakkhandha Vagga*; (2) *Mahā Vagga*; and (3) *Pāṭika Vagga*. Each discourse deals, at considerable length and in great detail, with one or more than one aspect of the Teaching.

The *suttas* contained in the *Dīgha Nikāya* reveal the gentleness, compassion, power, and penetrating wisdom of the *Buddha*. Included are teachings on mindfulness (*Mahāsātipatṭhāna Sutta*, no. 22); on morality, concentration, and wisdom (*Subha Sutta*, no. 10); on Dependent Origination (*Mahānidāna Sutta*, no. 15); on the roots and causes of wrong views (*Brahmajāla Sutta*, no. 1); and a long description of the *Buddha*’s last days and passing away (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, no. 16). Moreover, a wealth of practical advice and insight is included for all those traveling along the spiritual path.

Textual Analysis²¹

The beginning of each *sutta* is the same: *Evam me sutam. Ekam samayam bhagavā ... viharati ...* “Thus have I heard. At one time, the *Buddha* ... was staying (at) ...” The next sentence usually names the principal interlocutor of the *Buddha*.²² This introduction has been discussed at length in the Commentaries on the Pāli Canon and frequently again in modern times.

The same beginning is found in all the *Nikāyas*, with an interesting exception in the *Itivuttaka*.

The end of each *sutta* is formalized as well, though not as strictly as the opening: “thus spoke the *Buddha* [or a monk such as Sāriputta, etc.]. Delighted, the monks [or the person addressed] approved what the *Buddha* had said.” This formula occurs sixteen

and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: An Anthology of Suttas from the Anguttara Nikāya* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press [1999]).

²⁰ Literally, “Sage of the Sākyas,” “Sage of the Sākyā Clan.”

²¹ This section is adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 26—32.

²² This is the *nidāna* (occasion) and the *puggala* (person).

times in the *Dīgha Nikāya* and about a hundred times in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, while the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* and *Anguttara Nikāya* are quite different. Other concluding formulas will not be discussed here. Still, it may be noted that sometimes the title of the *sutta* is given, for example, as Brahmajāla or Ambaṭṭha, never as Brahmajāla Sutta or Ambaṭṭha Sutta, etc., and that these discourses are called *veyyākaraṇa* “explanation,” and again not *suttanta* “discourse, *sutta*.”

The end of the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is quite unique, which is an unusual text in many other ways as well: *evaṃ etaṃ bhūtapubban ti* “thus it was in former times.”

The middle part of each *sutta* is usually a highly formalized dialogue, though it attempts to preserve the actual situation in which the *sutta* was spoken. In contrast to a modern author, however, who might imitate an actual conversation by creating a fictitious oralist, the true oral nature found in early Buddhist texts avoids the natural style of a typical conversation, a situation that resulted from the need to create a formalized text that could be easily remembered and handed down by the tradition. In this respect, the remembered and true oral nature of the early Buddhists is ultimately more artificial than the fictitious orality in a modern novel.

More than half of the dialogues in the *Dīgha Nikāya* are debates with Brahmins or with members of other sects roughly contemporaneous with early Buddhism, and, consequently, they contain much, sometimes nearly the only surviving, information on these sects. Debates of this kind were popular in ancient India long before Buddhism arose and are well known from Vedic literature, though the early Buddhists developed and perfected them.

Debates are concentrated at the beginning of the *Dīgha Nikāya*; all thirteen *suttas* of the *Silakkhandha Vagga* belong to this category. Here, it is interesting to note that *sutta* no. 2, Sāmaññaphala Sutta (The Fruits of the Homeless Life), consists of two parts, the second part being repeated no less than four times in other *suttas* in debates with four different persons and at four different locations (no. 6, Mahāli Sutta, at Vesālī; no. 7, Jāliya Sutta, at Kosambī; no. 10, Subha Sutta, at Sāvattthī; and no. 12, Lohicca Sutta, at Kosala). This raises the question of why a certain place name occurs in a certain *sutta*. One might try to find an answer starting from the mythological *sutta* no. 21, Sakkapañha Sutta (Sakka’s Questions [A God Consults the *Buddha*]), in which the *Buddha* answers the questions of the god Sakka (Indra) in a cave called Indasālā. The location of this cave is described very precisely. This points to a local tradition preserved in place names. Perhaps, they were not originally really meant to point to the place where a certain discourse was given, but rather to the place where the text was handed down. If this is true, then it makes sense to have four local traditions preserved in these four *Dīgha Nikāya suttas* and incorporated into the *Dīgha Nikāya* as a supra-regional collection to please the respective Buddhist communities. A similar idea was put forth long ago by F. L. Woodward (1871—1951), who observed that Sāvattthī is mentioned in no less than 736 *suttas* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, which, according to Woodward, might have been compiled there.

It is further interesting to note that, in contrast to the regularly mentioned place name, no time of day is given regarding when the *suttas* were spoken. Only in the Commentaries is a sort of chronology invented.

Another question that cannot at present be answered concerns the idea behind the collections preserved in the *Nikāyas*. Moreover, there seems to be hardly any information in the ancient texts about the actual use made of them. Occasionally, recitations are mentioned in the *Mahāvamsa*.

For the *Vinaya*, the answer is easy: Rules were needed to run the Buddhist *Sangha*. The *Nikāyas*, on the other hand, are a compendium of the Teachings, compiled so that the Teachings could be preserved and so that monks and nuns could learn about and defend the Buddhist positions, as is said in the *Samyutta Nikāya* (IV138, 5—9): “if, monks, other ascetics should ask you ... you should know the answer.” Furthermore, the debates in the *Dīgha Nikāya* seem to have been used to convince non-Buddhists of the superiority of the Buddhist position, since that is to whom they are outwardly directed. It is, however, not unlikely that the content of these debates was soon outdated, once the non-Buddhists had been defeated and Buddhism had established itself. Then, the debates may have served as a kind of model for discussions. The texts in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, on the other hand, which contain instructions for monks and nuns, may have had a more lasting value.

While the first *vagga* (section) of the *Dīgha Nikāya* is characterized by debates, the second *vagga* contains texts (some legendary) relating to the life of the *Buddha*. In *Dīgha Nikāya* no. 14, Mahāpadāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on the Lineage), the lives of the six predecessors of the historical *Buddha* are described. The life story of the sixth, Vipassin, is related at length and serves as the model for the latest *Buddha*, the Buddha Gotama.

Dīgha Nikāya no. 15, Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Origination), discusses important points of the *Dhamma* such as *paṭicca samuppāda* (Dependent Origination).

The most prominent text in the *Dīgha Nikāya* is no. 16, Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (The Great Passing [The *Buddha*’s Last Days]). This text forms a unit with *sutta* no. 17, Mahāsudassana Sutta (The Great King of Glory), which relates the legend of Kusinārā, the place where the *Buddha* passed away. Taken together, both texts comprise about 120 printed pages. If *sutta* collections such as the *Itivuttaka* or *Udāna* (both books of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*) are compared, this could easily have been a separate unit of the *Tipiṭaka*. According to Frauwallner, its original place would then have been at the end of the *Vinaya*.

The account of the last days of the *Buddha*, His food poisoning, His passing away at Kusinārā, and the distribution of His relics, is, indeed, the first really long literary composition extant in ancient India. Although *Brāhmaṇas* as such are, of course, much longer, they are compiled from small, separate, and independent pieces, while the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is built according to a uniform plan. The structure of the text shows how the compiler(s) had to struggle with such an unusually long text. Time and again, they are at the point of losing their thread, for example, when the *Buddha* explains the

eight reasons for an earthquake to Venerable Ānanda, which makes good sense in the context, other groups of eight from the *Anguttara Nikāya* follow suit, which have no relation at all to the context. At the same time, this shows how pieces of text known by heart may intrude into any context once there is a corresponding key word. This so-called “uncontrolled orality” created those small sections — “incongruous” or “out-of-place” sub-texts (“Sondertexte” in German) — that are embedded in larger texts.

A most unusual text is *Dīgha Nikāya* no. 21, Sakkapañha Sutta (Sakka’s Questions [A God Consults the *Buddha*]). Before he himself dares to see the *Buddha* at the Indasālā cave, the god Sakka sends the *gandhabba*²³ Pañcasika to serenade the *Buddha* with a song, which, indeed, is a love song. Here, a very rare literary genre has been preserved in a most unusual context.

Much attention has been paid by modern scholars to *Dīgha Nikāya* no. 27, Aggañña Sutta (On Knowledge of Beginnings), because it contains important information on the caste system and on cosmology.

The last five *suttas* are different from all others in the *Dīgha Nikāya* in one way or another. No. 30, Lakkhaṇa Sutta (The Marks of a Great Man), contains verses in various metres, hardly known otherwise. No. 31, Sigālovāda Sutta (To Sigālovāda [Advice to Lay People]), treats ethics for lay people and is called *gihivinaya* “*Vinaya* for householders.” The instructions are given in the form of questions and answers, and may have been a kind of manual for teaching lay people. It is one of the texts that has gained some importance in “Buddhist modernism.” No. 32, Āṭānāṭiya Sutta (The Āṭānāṭi Protective Verses), is not really a *sutta* but a “protection text” (*paritta*). It also is part of a collection of twenty-two *paritta* texts. The last two *suttas*, no. 33, Saṅgīti Sutta (The Chanting Together), and no. 34, Dasuttara Sutta (Expanding Decades), are arranged according to the number of items treated, a principle well known from the *Anguttara Nikāya*. Both discourses are delivered by Venerable Sāriputta. At the beginning of no. 33, the “recitation text,” it is stated that the Jain leader Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta has died without properly instructing his community of followers. To avoid a similar situation among Buddhists, Venerable Sāriputta suggests a joint recitation of the *Dhamma* before the *Buddha*, who then approves what has been recited. This strongly recalls the next to last chapter of the *Khandhaka* of the *Vinaya Pīṭaka*, the account of the First Council.

It seems that the last two *suttas* are secondary additions to the *Dīgha Nikāya*. One might even conjecture that the original length of the *Dīgha Nikāya* was three times ten *suttas* — thirty in all —, just as that of the *Khandhaka* in the *Vinaya Pīṭaka* was twenty chapters, or two (*Mahāvagga* and *Cullavagga*/*Cūḷavagga*) times ten.

²³ Here, the term *gandhabba* refers to a heavenly musician. It should not be confused with the *gandhabba* (also spelled *gantabba*) that refers to a suitable being ready to be born in a particular womb. In this sense, the term is used only in this specific connection and is not to be mistaken for a permanent soul.

Synopsis:²⁴

1. Sīlakkhandha Vagga

1. Brahmajāla Sutta (The Net of Brahmā): This *sutta* discusses the “perfect net” in which sixty-two heretical forms of speculation concerning the world and the self taught by other teachers of the time are caught.
2. Sāmaññaphala Sutta (The Fruits of the Homeless Life): The *Buddha* explains to King Ajatāsattu the advantages of joining the Buddhist Orders and renouncing the worldly life.
3. Ambaṭṭha Sutta (Pride of Birth and Its Fall): This *sutta* contains a dialogue between the *Buddha* and Ambaṭṭha on caste. It contains a reference to the legend of King Okkāka, the traditional founder of the Sākya clan.
4. Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta (Qualities of a True Brahmin): This *sutta* contains a dialogue with the Brahmin Soṇadaṇḍa on the characteristics of a true Brahmin.
5. Kūṭadanta Sutta (A Bloodless Sacrifice): This *sutta* contains a dialogue with the Brahmin Kūṭadanta condemning animal sacrifice.
6. Mahāli Sutta (Heavenly Sights, Soul, and Body): This *sutta* contains a dialogue with Mahāli on *deva*-like vision and hearing and the attainment of full Enlightenment.
7. Jāliya Sutta (About Jāliya): This *sutta* deals with the nature of the life-principle as compared with the body. This *sutta* repeats the last part of the Mahāli Sutta (no. 6).
8. Kassapaśīhanāda Sutta (The Great Lion’s Roar; also called “The Lion’s Roar to Kassapa”): In this *sutta*, the naked ascetic Kassapa asks if it is true that the *Buddha* condemns all forms of austerity. The *Buddha* denies this, saying that one must distinguish between the different forms. Kassapa gives a list of standard practices, and the *Buddha* says that one may do any of these things, but, if one’s morality, heart, and wisdom are not developed, one is still far from being an ascetic or a Brahmin (in the true sense of the term). The *Buddha* himself has practiced all possible austerities to perfection, and morality and wisdom as well and points out the futility of self-mortification. Thereupon, Kassapa requests ordination, and soon, through diligent practice, he becomes an *Arahant*.
9. Potṭhapāda Sutta (States of Consciousness): This *sutta* contains a discussion with Potṭhapāda on the nature of the soul, in which the *Buddha* states that the question is irrelevant and not conducive to Enlightenment.
10. Subha Sutta (Morality, Concentration, Wisdom): This *sutta* contains a discourse, attributed to Venerable Ānanda, on morality, concentration, and wisdom.
11. Kevaddha Sutta (What Brahmā Did Not Know): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* refuses to allow a *Bhikkhu* to perform a miracle. The *Buddha* tells the story of a monk who

²⁴ Most of the descriptions in this synopsis are adapted from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Śri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]), pp. 4—7. However, several are adapted instead from Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications [hardcover edition 1995]); first published in 1987 in paperback under the title *Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications), pp. 55—62. Several are combinations from both sources.

visited the *devas* (celestial beings) to question them about where the four great elements cease without remainder. No one there could answer him — not even the Great Brahmā, who referred him back to the *Buddha* for an answer.

12. Lohicca Sutta (Good and Bad Teachers): This *sutta* contains a dialogue with the Brahmin Lohicca on the ethics of teaching.
13. Tevijja Sutta (The Threefold Knowledge [The Way to Brahmā]): This *sutta* deals with the futility of a knowledge of the Vedas as a means to attaining companionship with Brahmā.

2. Mahā Vagga

14. Mahāpadāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on the Lineage): This *sutta* contains the sublime story of the Buddha Gotama and His six predecessors. It also contains a discourse on the Buddha Vipassī, from his descent from the Tusita heaven to the commencement of his mission.
15. Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Origination): This *sutta* deals with the chain of causation and theories of the soul.
16. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (The Great Passing [The *Buddha's* Last Days]): This is the Great Discourse that records the last days of the *Tathāgata* and of His passing into *parinibbāna*.
17. Mahāsudassana Sutta (The Great King of Glory): This *sutta* relates the story of a previous existence of the *Buddha* as King Sudassana, told by the *Buddha* on His death-bed.
18. Janavasabha Sutta (Brahmā Addresses the Gods): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* relates the story of the *yakkha* (a demon [of the good variety]) Janavasabha to the people of Nādikā.
19. Mahāgovinda Sutta (The Great Steward [A Past Life of Gotama]): In this *sutta*, the heavenly musician Pañcasikha relates the story of Mahāgovinda to the *Buddha*, who states that He Himself was Mahāgovinda.
20. Mahāsamaya Sutta (The Mighty Gathering [*Devas* Come to See the *Buddha*]): This *sutta* discusses the *devas* of the Pure Abodes (*suddhāvāsa*) and their evolution. This *sutta* is almost exclusively in verse and gives much mythological lore.
21. Sakkapañha Sutta (Sakka's Questions [A God Consults the *Buddha*]): Sakka, lord of *devas*, visits the *Buddha* and learns from Him that everything that originates is subject also to dissolution.
22. Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness): This is considered by many to be the most important discourse in the Pāli Canon. This *sutta* is very different in character from those that immediately precede it. It recurs word for word, less verses 18—21, as *sutta* no. 10 in the *Majjhima Nikāya*. The “one way” for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and distress, for the gaining of *nibbāna*, is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*sati-patṭhāna*): mindfulness of (1) body, (2) feelings, (3) mind, and (4) mental objects. Detailed instructions are given for mindful awareness of breathing and so on. Thus,

under mind-objects, we read, for example: “If sensual desire is present in himself, a monk knows that it is present. If sensual desire is absent in himself, a monk knows that it is absent. Moreover, he knows how unarisen sensual desire comes to arise, he knows how the abandonment of arisen sensual desire comes about, and he knows how the non-arising of the abandoned sensual desire in the future will come about.” (According to the Commentary, “monk” here means anyone who does the practice.) The *sutta* ends with an account of the Four Noble Truths.

23. Pāyāsi Sutta (About Pāyāsi [Debate with a Skeptic]): In this *sutta*, Venerable Kumāra-Kassapa converts Prince Pāyāsi from the wrong view that there is no future life or reward for actions.

3. Pāṭika Vagga

24. Pāṭika Sutta (About Pāṭikaputta [The Charlatan]): This *sutta* relates the story of the dim-witted disciple Sunakkhata who leaves the *Buddha* to follow other teachers because the *Buddha* does not work miracles or teach the origin of things.
25. Udumbarika-Sīhanāda Sutta (The Lion’s Roar to the Udumbarikans): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* discusses asceticism with the ascetic Nigrodha.
26. Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta (The Lion’s Roar on the Turning of the Wheel): This *sutta* relates the story of the universal king, the corruption of morals and their restoration, and the coming of the future Buddha Metteyya.
27. Aggañña Sutta (On Knowledge of Beginnings): This *sutta* contains a discussion on caste and an exposition on the origin of things (as in *sutta* no. 24), down to the origin of the four castes.
28. Sampasādanīya Sutta (Serene Faith): This *sutta* contains a dialogue between the *Buddha* and Sāriputta, who describes the Teaching of the *Buddha* and asserts his faith in Him.
29. Pāsādika Sutta (The Delightful Discourse): This *sutta* contains a discussion of good and bad teachers, and why the *Buddha* has not revealed certain things.
30. Lakkhaṇa Sutta (The Marks of a Great Man): This *sutta* discusses the thirty-two marks of a Great Man.
31. Sigālovāda Sutta (To Sigālovāda [Advice to Lay People]): This *sutta* contains advice given by the *Buddha* to Sigālovāda on the duties of a householder to the six classes of persons.
32. Āṭānāṭṭiya Sutta (The Āṭānāṭṭa Protective Verses): This *sutta* contains a discussion of the Four Great Kings and their spells for protection against evil.
33. Sangīti Sutta (The Chanting Together): In this *sutta*, Venerable Sāriputta outlines the principles of the Teaching in ten numerical groups — lists of items for recitation.
34. Dasuttara Sutta (Expanding Decades): This *sutta* contains similar material to what is found in the preceding one (no. 33). Here, Venerable Sāriputta outlines the doctrine in tenfold series.

Majjhima Nikāya

Overview

The *Majjhima Nikāya* (Middle-length Discourses) contains 152 *suttas* arranged in fifteen sections (*vagga*), roughly classified according to subject matter. Though the difference between the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Dīgha Nikāya* is mainly one of length, the *suttas* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* being, on the whole, shorter than those of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya* contains a much larger number of *suttas* and an even greater variety of content.

Textual Analysis²⁵

The *Majjhima Nikāya* is divided into three divisions, each of which contains fifty (*paññāsa* or *paññāsa*) *suttas*: (1) *Mahā-paññāsa* “great (division) of fifty (texts)”: nos. 1—50; (2) *Majjhima-paññāsa* “middle (division) of fifty (texts)”: nos. 51—100; and (3) *Upāri-paññāsa* “further (division) of fifty (texts)”: nos. 101—152. Each group of fifty is divided into groups of ten texts. Sometimes, *suttas* are grouped together in pairs called *Cūḷa*- and *Mahā*- “small” and “great” texts, respectively.

As in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, there is a text in the *Majjhima Nikāya* that is repeated four times, nos. 131—134: (1) no. 131, Bhaddēkaratta Sutta, Sāvattihī; (2) no. 132, Ānanda-bhaddēkaratta Sutta, Sāvattihī; (3) no. 133, Mahākaccāna-bhaddēkaratta Sutta, Rājagaha; and (4) no. 134, Lomasakangiya-bhaddēkaratta Sutta, Kapilavatthu. The first *sutta* (no. 131) is delivered by the *Buddha* Himself in a way that is perhaps unique in the *Tipiṭaka*. At the beginning, four verses are recited and then explained: This is called *uddesa* “outline,” followed by *vibhanga* “commentary,” *Majjhima Nikāya* III, no. 187, 18, a literary form that is used frequently in later times. The second *sutta* (no. 132) is recited by Venerable Ānanda, with the *Buddha* approving, and, in the third *sutta* (no. 133), the *Buddha* recites only the verses and then has them explained by Mahākassapa, who is the monk who knows in full what the *Buddha* means. The last *sutta* (no. 134) is the same text repeated at Kapilavatthu. The *sutta* extols the fame of the deity Bhaddēkaratta, who has heard of this text even in the Tāvattimsa Heaven and asks Lomasakangiya about it.

Some texts of the *Majjhima Nikāya* seem to be younger than those in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, when it is stated that the dialogue has taken place after the *parinibbāna* of the *Buddha* has taken place, such as *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 84, Madhura Sutta, or no. 94, Ghoṭamukha Sutta, where the legend about the foundation of the Ghoṭamukhī Hall in Pāṭaliputta is related in an appendix. Quite some time seems to have elapsed after the *parinibbāna* in no. 124, Bakkula Sutta, because Bakkula, who is considered to be the healthiest of all the monks, enters *parinibbāna* eighty years after becoming a member of the *Sangha*. It seems that he must have survived the *Buddha* by half a century, something

²⁵ This section is adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 32—35.

that has caught the attention of the commentator, who states that this *sutta* was recited only during the Second Council, that is, one hundred years after the *parinibbāna*. This remark is quite interesting for the history of the Theravādin scriptures, for it shows that, even in this tradition, later additions were admitted into the canon.

Other texts come, at times, very near to some sort of personal memory of the *Buddha*. *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 140, Dhātuvibhanga Sutta, tells of the novice Pukkusāti, who meets the *Buddha* by chance without knowing Him, because he received his lower ordination²⁶ from some other monk. Only after being taught by the *Buddha* Himself does he recognize Him and asks for the higher ordination (*upasampadā*), but, sadly, he dies before bowl and robe are at hand. Still the *Buddha* declares that Pukkusāti will enter *nibbāna* even without ever having become a fully ordained monk.

In *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 144, Channavāda Sutta, the seriously ill monk Channa tries to commit suicide, but Venerables Sāriputta and Mohācunda prevent him from doing so. The *Buddha*, however, does not object to the suicide, since only the craving for rebirth should be reprehended. Most interesting are those *suttas* relating personal memories of the *Buddha* Himself, such as *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 26, Ariyapariyesana Sutta, where the *Buddha* talks about His teachers Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, or when the former fellow student of the *Buddha*, Bharanḍuka Kālāma, is mentioned in the *Tikanipāta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*. Further, *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 36, Mahāsaccaka Sutta, contains the famous episode of the *Bodhisatta* meditating as a child under a rose-apple tree (*jambu*). All these are elements form a “biography” of the *Buddha*, to which *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 123, Acchariyabbhutatadhamma Sutta, must be added.

Occasionally, the *Majjhima Nikāya* also contains *Vinaya* material, such as *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 104, Sāmagāma Sutta, which refers to *Cullavagga* IV. *Samathakhandhaka*, and *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 82, Ratthapāla Sutta, the story of Ratthapāla, whose parents tried in vain to prevent him from entering the *Sangha*.

The content of the *Majjhima Nikāya* shows a much greater variety of topics than does the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Only the great debates are absent in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, though discussions with those holding wrong views (*micchā-ditṭhi* or simply *ditṭhi*) do occur, as, for example, in *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 56, Upāli Sutta, or no. 57, Kukkuravatika Sutta, where strange ascetic practices are described.

It has never really been investigated in detail what additional material can be found in the *Majjhima Nikāya* and how exactly both the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Dīgha Nikāya* relate to each other. Such an investigation would be of prime importance for finding out what purpose the respective texts may have been intended to serve. Several scholars have suggested that the *Majjhima Nikāya* may have been used to instruct new converts to Buddhism.

²⁶ *Pabbajjā*, literally, “going forth,” or, more fully stated, “going forth from home to the homeless life” of a monk. The ordination requires severing all family and social ties to live the pure life of a monk, in order to realize the goal of final deliverance pointed out by the *Buddha*. Thus, *pabbajjā* has become the name for admission as a *sāmaṇera*, or novice, that is, as a candidate for the Order of *Bhikkhus*. Cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), p. 134.

Synopsis:²⁷

Mahāpaṇṇāsa

1. Mūlapariyāya Vagga (The Division of the Discourse on the Root)

1. Mūlapariyāya Sutta (The Root of All Things): This *sutta* discusses how states of consciousness originate. The *Buddha* analyzes the cognitive processes of four types of individuals: (1) the untaught ordinary person; (2) the disciple in higher training; (3) the *Arahant*; and (4) the *Tathāgata*. This is one of the deepest and most difficult *suttas* in the Pāli Canon.
2. Sabbāsava Sutta (All the Taints): This *sutta* deals with the elimination of the taints (cankers) (*āsava*).
3. Dhammadāyāda Sutta (Heirs in *Dhamma*): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* exhorts the *Bhikkhus* to realize the importance of the *Dhamma* and the non-importance of their physical wants.
4. Bhayabherava Sutta (Fear and Dread): This *sutta* deals with braving the fears and terrors of the forest. It also presents an account of the *Buddha*'s Enlightenment.
5. Anangaṇa Sutta (Without Blemishes): This *sutta* contains a dialogue between Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna on the attainment of freedom from depravity.
6. Ākankheyya Sutta (If a *Bhikkhu* Should Wish): This *sutta* deals with the things for which a *Bhikkhu* may wish. The *sutta* begins by stressing the importance of virtue as the foundation for a *Bhikkhu*'s training; the *Buddha* then goes on to enumerate the benefits that a *Bhikkhu* can reap by properly fulfilling the training.
7. Vatthūpama Sutta (The Simile of the Cloth): This *sutta* contains the parable of the soiled cloth and the defiled mind.
8. Sallekha Sutta (Effacement): This *sutta* deals with the elimination of self (*attā*) and false views (*micchā-diṭṭhi* or simply *diṭṭhi*), as well as how to efface defilements (*kilesa*). The *Buddha* rejects the view that mere attainment of the *jhānas* (meditative absorptions) is effacement and explains how effacement is properly practiced in His Teaching.
9. Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta (Right View): This *sutta* is a discourse by Venerable Sāriputta on right views (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). This important discourse contains separate sections on the wholesome and the unwholesome, nutriment, the Four Noble Truths, the twelve factors of Dependent Origination, and the taints.
10. Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (The Foundations of Mindfulness): This *sutta* is the same as that found in the *Dīgha Nikāya* no. 22, but without the detailed explanation of the Four Noble Truths. This is one of the fullest and most important *suttas* by the *Buddha*, dealing with meditation, with particular emphasis on the development of insight. The *Buddha* begins by declaring the Four Foundations of Mindfulness to be the

²⁷ Most of the descriptions in this synopsis are adapted from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Śri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]), pp. 8—20. However, several are adapted instead from Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications [second edition 2001]), pp. 61—75. Several are combinations from both sources.

direct path for the realization of *nibbāna*, then gives detailed instructions on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness: the contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and mind-objects.

2. Sīhanāda Vagga (The Division on the Lion's Roar)

11. Cūḷasīhanāda Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Lion's Roar): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* declares that only in His Dispensation can the Four Stages of Sainthood be found, explaining how His Teaching can be distinguished from other creeds through its unique rejection of all doctrines of self.
12. Mahāsīhanāda Sutta (The Longer Discourse on the Lion's Roar): Here, the *Buddha* expounds the ten powers of a *Tathāgata*, His four kinds of intrepidity, and other superior qualities, which entitle Him to "roar the lion's roar in the assemblies."
13. Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Mass of Suffering): In this discourse, the *Buddha* explains the full understanding of sensual pleasures, material form, and feelings. There is a long section on the dangers inherent in sensual pleasures.
14. Cūḷadukkhakkhandha Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Mass of Suffering): This *sutta* is a variation on the preceding one, ending in a discussion with Jain ascetics on the nature of pleasure and pain.
15. Anumāna Sutta (Inference): This *sutta* was delivered by Venerable Moggallāna. It deals with the value of introspection. (There is no reference to the *Buddha* anywhere in this *sutta*.)
16. Cetokhila Sutta (The Wilderness in the Heart): Here, the *Buddha* explains the "five wildernesses in the heart" and the five "shackles in the heart."
17. Vanapattha Sutta (Jungle Thickets): This *sutta* deals with the advantages and disadvantages of the forest life.
18. Madhupiṇḍika Sutta (The Honeyball): Here, the *Buddha* gives a brief outline of His Teaching, which Venerable Kaccāna elaborates.
19. Dvedhāvitakka Sutta (Two Kinds of Thoughts): This *sutta* discusses the parable of sensuality. There is also a repetition of the account of the Enlightenment of the *Buddha* as in the Bhayabherava Sutta (*Majjhima Nikāya* no. 4).
20. Vitakkasaṇṭhāna Sutta (The Removal of Distracting Thoughts): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* presents methods of meditation to dispel undesirable thoughts.

3. Tatiya Vagga (The Third Division)

21. Kakacūpama Sutta (The Simile of the Saw): This *sutta* focuses on the need to control feelings and the mind under the most severe provocation.
22. Alagaddūpama Sutta (The Simile of the Snake): This *sutta* presents the simile of the water-snake. Holding wrong views of the *Dhamma* is like seizing a snake by the tail.

23. Vammika Sutta (The Ant-Hill): In this *sutta*, a deity presents a *Bhikkhu* with an obscure riddle. The *Buddha* unravels the riddle for the *Bhikkhu*. This *sutta* contains the simile of the smouldering ant-hill (*vammika*²⁸) as the human body.
24. Rathavinīta Sutta (The Relay Chariots): In this *sutta*, Venerable Puṇṇa Mantāniputta explains to Venerable Sāriputta that the goal of the Holy Life, final *nibbāna*, is to be reached by means of the Seven Stages of Purification.
25. Nivāpa Sutta (The Bait): Here, the *Buddha* explains the parable of Māra as a sower or hunter laying traps for deer.
26. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Noble Quest): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* recounts His renunciation, search, and attainment of Enlightenment.
27. Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint): This is the shorter version of the “elephant's footprint” simile on the step-by-step training of a *Bhikkhu*.
28. Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta (The Longer Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint): This is the longer version of the “elephant's footprint” simile on the Four Noble Truths expounded by Venerable Sāriputta.
29. Mahāsāropama Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Simile of the Heartwood): This *sutta* deals with the danger of gain, honor, and fame. This *sutta* is said to have been delivered when Devadatta left the Order.
30. Cūlasāropama Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Simile of the Heartwood): The preceding *sutta* is further developed here. Both *suttas* emphasize that the goal of the Holy Life is the unshakable liberation of the mind — everything else is secondary.

4. Mahāyamaka Vagga (The Greater Division of Pairs)

31. Cūlagosinga Sutta (The Shorter Discourse in Gosinga): This *sutta* contains a conversation between the *Buddha* and three *Bhikkhus*, who speak on harmonious living and relate their attainments to Him.
32. Mahāgosinga Sutta (The Greater Discourse in Gosinga): Here, six *Bhikkhus* discuss what kind of monk makes the forest beautiful.
33. Mahāgopālaka Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Cowherd): This *sutta* relates the eleven bad and good qualities of a herdsman and a monk.
34. Cūlagopālaka Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Cowherd): This *sutta* presents the simile of the foolish and wise herdsman crossing the river.
35. Cūlasaccaka Sutta (The Shorter Discourse to Saccaka): This *sutta* contains a debate between the *Buddha* and Saccaka on the nature of the Five Aggregates and other topics.
36. Mahāsaccaka Sutta (The Greater Discourse to Saccaka): This *sutta* contains an account of the *Buddha's* asceticism and Enlightenment, with instructions on right meditation.

²⁸ Also spelled *vammika*. The Sanskrit (Vedic) form is *valmika*.

37. Cūḷataṇhāsankhaya Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Destruction of Craving): Here, Sakka asks the *Buddha* about freedom from craving and satisfactorily repeats His reply to Venerable Moggallāna.
38. Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* refutes the wrong view of a *Bhikkhu* who thinks that it is consciousness that transmigrates.
39. Mahā-Assapura Sutta (The Greater Discourse at Assapura): Here, the *Buddha* elucidates “things that make one a recluse,” with a discourse covering many aspects of a *Bhikkhu*’s training.
40. Cūḷa-Assapura Sutta (The Shorter Discourse at Assapura): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains “the way proper to the recluse” not to be the mere outward practice of austerities but the inward purification from defilements.

5. Cūḷayamaka Vagga (The Shorter Division of Pairs)

41. Sāleyyaka Sutta (The Brahmins of Sālā): This *sutta* contains a discourse by the *Buddha* to the Brahmins of Sālā on why some beings go to celestial realms and why others go to woeful states after death.
42. Verañjaka Sutta (The Brahmins of Verañja): This *sutta* is the same as the preceding one repeated to the Brahmins of Verañja.
43. Mahāvedalla Sutta (The Greater Series of Questions and Answers): This *sutta* is a psychological discourse delivered by Venerable Sāriputta to Mahākotṭhita.
44. Cūḷavedalla Sutta (The Shorter Series of Questions and Answers): This *sutta* is also a psychological discourse delivered by the Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā to the lay devotee Visākha.
45. Cūḷadhammasamādāna Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Ways of Undertaking Things): Here, the *Buddha* explains, differently from the following discourse, four ways of undertaking things, distinguished according to whether they are painful or pleasant now and whether they ripen into pleasure or pain in the future — in other words, the results of good and bad conduct.
46. Mahādhammasamādāna Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Ways of Undertaking Things): Here, the *Buddha* explains, differently from the preceding discourse, four ways of undertaking things, distinguished according to whether they are painful or pleasant now and whether they ripen into pleasure or pain in the future — in other words, the results of good and bad conduct.
47. Vīmaṃsaka Sutta (The Inquirer): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* invites the *Bhikkhus* to make a thorough investigation of Himself in order to determine whether or not He can be accepted as fully Enlightened.
48. Kosambiya Sutta (The Kosambians): This *sutta* contains a discourse to the *Bhikkhus* of Kosambī on the evil of quarrelling.
49. Brahmanimantanika Sutta (The Invitation of a Brahmā): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* dissuades the Brahmā Baka from the wrong view of permanency.

50. Māratajjaniya Sutta (The Rebuke to Māra): In this *sutta*, Venerable Moggallāna warns Māra about the dangers in creating trouble for a disciple of the *Buddha*.

Majjhimaṇṇāsa

6. Gahapati Vagga (The Division on Householders)

51. Kandaraka Sutta (To Kandaraka): This *sutta* contains a discourse on the four kinds of personality and on the steps to liberation.
52. Aṭṭhakanāgara Sutta (The Man from Aṭṭhakanāgara): This *sutta* contains a discourse by Venerable Ānanda on the ways to attain *nibbāna*.
53. Sekha Sutta (The Disciple in Higher Training): Here, the *Buddha* opens a new meeting hall at Kapilavatthu. At the *Buddha*'s request, Venerable Ānanda delivers a discourse on the practices undertaken by a disciple in higher training.
54. Potaliya Sutta (To Potaliya): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains to Potaliya the real significance of the abandonment of wordliness. This *sutta* contains a striking series of similes on the dangers in sensual pleasures.
55. Jīvaka Sutta (To Jīvaka): Here, the *Buddha* explains the rules He has promulgated concerning meat-eating and defends His disciples against unjust accusations.
56. Upāli Sutta (To Upāli): This *sutta* contains an account of the conversion of Upāli the millionaire from Jainism.
57. Kukkuravatika Sutta (The Dog-Duty Ascetic): This *sutta* contains a dialogue between the *Buddha* and two ascetics, one of whom imitates the behavior of a dog, and the other of whom imitates the behavior of an ox. The *Buddha* advises them on the futility of their practices and gives them a discourse on *kamma* and its fruit.
58. Abhayarājakumāra Sutta (To Prince Abhaya): The Jain leader, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, sends Prince Abhaya to question the *Buddha* on the condemnation of Devadatta.
59. Bahuvedanīya Sutta (The Many Kinds of Feeling): This *sutta* deals with the different classifications of feelings and the gradation of pleasures.
60. Apaṇṇaka Sutta (The Incontrovertible Teaching): Here, the *Buddha* gives a group of Brahmin householders an “incontrovertible teaching” that will help them steer clear of the tangle in contentious views.

7. Bhikkhu Vagga (The Division on Bhikkhus)

61. Ambalaṭṭhikā-Rāhulovāda Sutta (Advice to Rāhula at Ambalaṭṭhikā): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* admonishes His son, the novice Rāhula, on the dangers of lying and stresses the importance of constant reflection on one's motives.
62. Mahārāhulovāda Sutta (The Greater Discourse of Advice to Rāhula): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* teaches Venerable Rāhula the meditation on the elements, the meditation on mindfulness of breathing, and other topics.
63. Cūḷamālunkya Sutta (The Shorter Discourse to Mālunkyāputta): This is the famous discourse in which Venerable Mālunkyāputta threatens to leave the Order unless the *Buddha* answers certain metaphysical questions. Using the simile of the man struck

by a poisoned arrow, the *Buddha* makes clear exactly what He does and does not teach.

64. Mahāmālunkya Sutta (The Greater Discourse to Mālunkyāputta): Here, the *Buddha* teaches the path to abandoning the five lower fetters.
65. Bhaddāli Sutta (To Bhaddāli): This *sutta* contains the story of Bhaddāli's confession and the *Buddha's* counsel.
66. Laṭukikopama Sutta (The Simile of the Quail): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* stresses the importance of abandoning all fetters, no matter how harmless and trifling they may seem.
67. Cātumā Sutta (At Cātumā): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* instructs a group of newly-ordained *Bhikkhus* concerning four dangers to be overcome by those who have gone forth into the homeless life.
68. Naḷakapāna Sutta (At Naḷakapāna): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* questions Venerable Anuruddha concerning certain points of the *Dhamma*. He also explains why, when His disciples die, He declares their level of attainment and plane of rebirth.
69. Gulissāni Sutta (Gulissāni): Here, Venerable Sāriputta delivers a discourse on the rules to be followed by those who, like Venerable Gulissāni, dwell in the forest.
70. Kīṭāgiri Sutta (At Kīṭāgiri): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* reprimands a group of disobedient monks. In the course of the discussion, He presents an important seven-fold classification of noble disciples.

8. Paribbājaka Vagga (The Division on Wanderers)

71. Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta (To Vacchagotta on the Threefold True Knowledge): Here, the *Buddha* visits the ascetic Vacchagotta and claims that He is called “*tevijja*” (“possessing the threefold knowledge”), because He has recollection of His previous lives, supernormal vision, and knowledge of the way leading to the elimination of the taints (*āśava*).
72. Aggivacchagotta Sutta (To Vacchagotta on Fire): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains to the ascetic Vacchagotta why He does not hold any speculative views. Using the simile of the extinguished fire, He tries to indicate the destiny of the liberated being.
73. Mahāvacchagotta Sutta (The Greater Discourse to Vacchagotta): This *sutta* relates the full conversion of the ascetic Vacchagotta to the *Dhamma*, his going forth, and his attainment of Arahantship.
74. Dīghanakha Sutta (To Dīghanakha): Here, the *Buddha* refutes the skeptical views of the ascetic Dīghanakha (also known as Aggivessana) and teaches him the way to liberation through the contemplation of feelings. This *sutta* also contains a brief account of Venerable Sāriputta's attainment of Arahantship.
75. Māgandiya Sutta (To Māgandiya): Here, the *Buddha* meets the hedonist philosopher Māgandiya and points out to him the dangers in pursuing sensual pleasures, the benefits of renunciation, and the meaning of *nibbāna*.
76. Sandaka Sutta (To Sandaka): In this *sutta*, Venerable Ānanda teaches a group of wandering ascetics four ways to negate the living of the Holy Life and four kinds of

Holy Life without consolation. He then goes on to explain the Holy Life that is truly fruitful.

77. Mahāsakuludāyī Sutta (The Greater Discourse to Sakuludāyīn): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains to a group of wandering ascetics the reasons why His disciples venerate Him and look to Him for guidance.
78. Samaṇamaṇḍikā Sutta (Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains the qualities of perfect virtue.
79. Cūḷasakuludāyī Sutta (The Shorter Discourse to Sakuludāyīn): Here, the *Buddha* examines the doctrine of the Jain leader Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, using the simile of “the most beautiful girl in the country,” to expose the folly of his claims. At the end of the discourse, the Ascetic Sakuludāyīn (also called “Udāyīn”), though convinced of the superiority of the *Buddha*’s doctrine, is obstructed by his companions from living the Holy Life under the dispensation of the *Buddha*.
80. Vekhanassa Sutta (To Vekhanassa): This is partially similar to the preceding *sutta*, with an additional section on sensual pleasure.

9. Rāja Vagga (The Division on Kings)

81. Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta (Ghaṭṭikāra the Potter): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* tells Venerable Ānanda of His previous existence in Jotipāla at the time of the *Buddha* Kassapa.
82. Raṭṭhapāla Sutta (On Raṭṭhapāla): This *sutta* tells the story of a young man named Raṭṭhapāla, whose parents tried in vain to dissuade him from entering the *Sangha*. At a later date, Raṭṭhapāla returns home to visit his parents.
83. Makhādeva Sutta (King Makhādeva): Here, the *Buddha* recounts His previous life as King Makhādeva. The story is that of an ancient lineage of kings and how their virtuous tradition was broken due to negligence.
84. Madhurā Sutta (At Madhurā): This *sutta* contains a discourse given after the death of the *Buddha* by Venerable Kaccāna to King Avantiputta on the real meaning of caste.
85. Bodhirājakumāra Sutta (To Prince Bodhi): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* counters the claim that pleasure is to be gained through pain with an account of His own quest for Enlightenment.
86. Angulimāla Sutta (On Angulimāla): This *sutta* contains the famous story of how the *Buddha* subdued the notorious criminal Angulimāla and led him to the attainment of Arahantship.
87. Piyajātika Sutta (Born from Those Who Are Dear): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* gives consolation and advice to a household who has just lost a son, showing how sorrow and grief arise from those whom we hold dear. Eventually, news of this event reached the ears of King Pasenadi and Queen Mallikā, which resulted in a dispute between them. Thereupon, they sent the Brahmin Nāḷijangha to ask the *Buddha* about what he had said to the householder. After the *Buddha* explained the meaning, Nāḷijangha returned to the palace and settled the dispute.

88. Bāhitikā Sutta (The Cloak): In this *sutta*, Venerable Ānanda answers a question posed by King Pasenadi about the *Buddha*'s behavior. Thereafter, the King presents Venerable Ānanda with a piece of foreign cloth.
89. Dhammacetiya Sutta (Monuments to the *Dhamma*): Here, King Pasenadi visits the *Buddha* and extols the virtues of the Holy Life, presenting ten reasons why he shows such deep veneration to the *Buddha*.
90. Kaṇṇakatthala Sutta (At Kaṇṇakatthala): This *sutta* contains a conversation between the *Buddha* and King Pasenadi on caste, the *devas*, and Brahmā.

10. Brāhmaṇa Vagga (The Division on Brahmins)

91. Brahmāyu Sutta (Brahmāyu): In this *sutta*, an old and erudite Brahmin named Brahmāyu learns about the *Buddha*, goes to meet Him, and becomes a disciple. This *sutta* discusses the thirty-two marks of a Great Man and the *Buddha*'s daily routine.
92. Sela Sutta (To Sela): This *sutta* contains the story of the Brahmin Sela, who sees the thirty-two marks of the *Buddha*, gains faith in Him, and becomes a *Bhikkhu*, along with his company of pupils. (The same story is related in the *Sutta Nipāta* 3:7.)
93. Assalāyana Sutta (To Assalāyana): In this *sutta*, the young Brahmin Assalāyana approaches the *Buddha* and discusses the question of caste with Him. Assalāyana argues that Brahmins are the highest caste. This *sutta* contains an important presentation of the *Buddha*'s views on the subject.
94. Ghoṭamukha Sutta (To Ghoṭamukha): Here, the Brahmin Ghoṭamukha questions Venerable Udena on the value of the renunciate life. Thereafter, Ghoṭamukha builds an assembly hall for the *Sangha*.
95. Cankī Sutta (With Cankī): This *sutta* contains a discussion of brahmanic doctrines. The young Brahmin Cankī visits the *Buddha* and questions Him about these doctrines. The *Buddha* refutes these doctrines and instructs Cankī about the proper way to the realization of ultimate truth.
96. Esukārī Sutta (To Esukārī): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* and a Brahmin discuss the claim that the Brahmins are superior to the other castes.
97. Dhānañjāni Sutta (To Dhānañjāni): In this *sutta*, Sāriputta explains to the Brahmin Dhānañjāni that family duties are no excuse for wrong-doing.
98. Vāseṭṭha Sutta (To Vāseṭṭha): In this *sutta*, mainly in verse, the *Buddha* resolves a dispute between two young Brahmins on the nature of a true Brahmin. (The same discourse recurs in the *Sutta Nipāta* 3:9.)
99. Subha Sutta (To Subha): Here, the *Buddha* answers the young Brahmin Subha's questions about whether a person should remain a householder or leave the world, and then teaches him the way to rebirth in the Brahma-realm.
100. Sangārava Sutta (To Sangārava): In this *sutta*, a Brahmin student named Sangārava questions the *Buddha* about the basis on which He teaches the fundamentals of the Holy Life.

Uparipaṇṇāsa

11. Devadaha Vagga (The Division at Devadaha)

101. Devadaha Sutta (At Devadaha): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* examines the Jain thesis that liberation is to be attained by self-mortification, proposing a different account of how striving becomes fruitful.
102. Pañcattaya Sutta (The Five and Three): Here, the *Buddha* reviews five theories of the soul and shows that the way of release (*nibbāna*) does not depend upon any of them.
103. Kinti Sutta (What Do You Think about Me?): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains how *Bhikkhus* can resolve disagreements about the *Dhamma*.
104. Sāmagāma Sutta (At Sāmagāma): After the death of the Jain leader Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, the *Buddha* lays down disciplinary rules for the guidance of the *Sangha* to ensure harmonious functioning after His demise.
105. Sunakkhatta Sutta (To Sunakkhatta): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* discusses the problem of an individual's overestimation of his progress in meditation.
106. Ānañjasappāya Sutta (The Way to the Imperturbable): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains the approaches to various levels of higher meditative states culminating in *nibbāna*.
107. Gaṇakamoggallāna Sutta (To Gaṇaka Moggallāna): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* sets forth the gradual training of a Buddhist monk and describes Himself as “the one who shows the way.”
108. Gopakamoggallāna Sutta (With Gopaka Moggallāna): In this *sutta*, after the death of the *Buddha*, Venerable Ānanda explains to Vassakāra that the *Dhamma* is now the only guide.
109. Mahāpuṇṇama Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Full-moon Night): Here, the *Buddha* answers questions posed by a *Bhikkhu* on the five aggregates, clinging, personality view, and the realization of non-self.
110. Cūlapuṇṇama Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on the Full-moon Night): This *sutta* contains a discourse on the differences between an “untrue man” and a “true man.”

12. Anupada Vagga (The Division of One by One)

111. Anupada Sutta (One by One as They Occurred): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* describes Sāriputta's development of insight when he was training for Arahantship.
112. Chabbisodhana Sutta (The Sixfold Purity): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* discusses the questions to ask a *Bhikkhu* who claims he has attained Arahantship and how he would answer if his claim were genuine.
113. Sappurisa Sutta (The True Man): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* discusses the good and bad qualities of a *Bhikkhu*.
114. Sevitabbāsevitabba Sutta (To Be Cultivated and Not to Be Cultivated): Here, Venerable Sāriputta expounds the right way to live the Holy Life.

115. Bahudhātuka Sutta (The Many Kinds of Elements): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* expounds in detail the elements, the sense bases, Dependent Origination, and the kinds of situations that are possible and impossible in the world.
116. Isigili Sutta (The Gullet of the Seers): Here, the *Buddha* lists the names and epithets of *Pacceka Buddhas* who formerly dwelt on the mountain Isigili.
117. Mahācattārīsaka Sutta (The Great Forty): This *sutta* contains an exposition of the Noble Eightfold Path and of the interrelationships among the factors that constitute that Path.
118. Ānāpānasati Sutta (Mindfulness of Breathing): This important *sutta* contains an exposition of the sixteen steps in mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) and of the relationship of this meditation practice to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness and the Seven Factors of Enlightenment.
119. Kāyagatāsati Sutta (Mindfulness of the Body): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains how mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatāsati*) should be developed and cultivated and the benefits to which it leads.
120. Sankhāruppatti Sutta (Reappearance by Aspiration): This *sutta* contains a discourse on the development of the five qualities enabling a *Bhikkhu* to determine the conditions of his rebirth.

13. Suññata Vagga (The Division on Voidness)

121. Cūlasuññata Sutta (The Shorter Discourse on Voidness): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* instructs Venerable Ānanda on the “genuine, undistorted, pure descent into voidness (*suññatā*).”
122. Mahāsuññata Sutta (The Greater Discourse on Voidness): Upon finding that the *Bhikkhus* have grown fond of socializing, the *Buddha* stresses the need for seclusion in order to abide in voidness.
123. Acchariya-abbhutadhamma Sutta (Wonderful and Marvelous): Here, Venerable Ānanda recounts to a group of *Bhikkhus* the wonderful and marvelous events that preceded and attended the birth of the *Buddha*.
124. Bakkula Sutta (Bakkula): In this *sutta*, the elder disciple Bakkula enumerates the austere practices he has followed during his eighty years in the *Sangha* and exhibits a remarkable death.
125. Dantabhūmi Sutta (The Grade of the Tamed): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* uses the simile of elephant training to show how one should instruct another in the *Dhamma*.
126. Bhūmija Sutta (Bhūmija): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* employs a number of similes to illustrate the natural fruitfulness of the Noble Eightfold Path.
127. Anuruddha Sutta (Anuruddha): In this *sutta*, Venerable Anuruddha explains the difference between the immeasurable deliverance of the mind and the exalted deliverance of the mind to the householder Pañcakanga.
128. Upakkilesa Sutta (Imperfections): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* calms the quarrels and wrangling that have broken out among the *Bhikkhus* of Kosambī and discusses the

various impediments to meditative progress He encountered during His quest for Enlightenment, with particular reference to the divine-eye (*dibba-cakkhu*).

129. Bālapaṇḍita Sutta (Fools and Wise Men): This *sutta* discusses the sufferings of woeful states or life as an animal that a fool reaps through his evil deeds after death, and the pleasures of the celestial realms that a wise man reaps through his good deeds after death.
130. Devadūta Sutta (The Divine Messengers): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* describes the sufferings of woeful states that await the evil-doer after death.

14. Vibhanga Vagga (The Division of Expositions)

131. Bhaddekaratta Sutta (A Single Excellent Night): This *sutta* contains a poem of four verses, with a commentary on striving.
132. Ānandabhaddekaratta Sutta (Ānanda and a Single Excellent Night): This *sutta* is Venerable Ānanda's exposition of the same poem.
133. Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta Sutta (Mahākaccāna and a Single Excellent Night): This *sutta* is Venerable Mahākaccāna's exposition of the same poem.
134. Lomasakangiyabhaddekaratta Sutta (Lomasakangiya and a Single Excellent Night): This *sutta* is the *Buddha*'s exposition of the same poem to Venerable Lomasakangiya.
135. Cūḷakammavibhanga Sutta (The Shorter Exposition of Action): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains the various results of different kinds of *kamma*.
136. Mahākammavibhanga Sutta (The Greater Exposition of Action): Here, the *Buddha* refutes those who deny the operation of *kamma*.
137. Saḷāyatanavibhanga Sutta (The Exposition of the Sixfold Base): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* expounds the six internal and external sense bases and other related topics.
138. Uddesavibhanga Sutta (The Exposition of a Summary): In this *sutta*, Venerable Mahākaccāna elaborates on a brief saying of the *Buddha* on the training on consciousness and the overcoming of agitation.
139. Araṇavibhanga Sutta (The Exposition of Non-Conflict): This *sutta* contains a detailed discourse by the *Buddha* on things that lead to conflict and things that lead away from conflict.
140. Dhātuvibhanga Sutta (The Exposition of Elements): Stopping at a potter's workshop for the night, the *Buddha* meets a monk named Pukkusāti and gives him a profound discourse on elements culminating in the four foundations of Arahantship.
141. Saccavibhanga Sutta (The Exposition of the Truths): Here, Venerable Sāriputta gives a detailed analysis of the Four Noble Truths.
142. Dakkhiṇavibhanga Sutta (The Exposition of Offerings): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* enumerates fourteen kinds of personal offerings and seven kinds made to the *Sangha*.

15. Sālayatana Vagga (The Division of the Sixfold Base)

143. Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta (Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika): This *sutta* deals with the death of Anāthapiṇḍika, his rebirth in Tusita heaven, and his appearance before the *Buddha*.
144. Channovāda Sutta (Advice to Channa): In his *sutta*, Venerable Channa, gravely ill, takes his own life despite the attempts of two brother-monks to dissuade him.
145. Puṇṇovāda Sutta (Advice to Puṇṇa): In this *sutta*, Venerable Puṇṇa receives a short exhortation from the *Buddha* on bearing pleasure and pain and decides to go live among the fierce people of a remote territory.
146. Nandakovāda Sutta (Advice from Nandaka): Here, Venerable Nandaka gives a discourse on impermanence to Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī and five hundred *Bhikkhunīs*.
147. Cūḷārāhulovāda Sutta (The Shorter Discourse of Advice to Rāhula): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* takes His son, Venerable Rāhula, to the forest and questions him on impermanence. Thereupon, Venerable Rāhula attains Arahantship. Thinking that the *Buddha* would be further instructing Venerable Rāhula on the destruction of the taints, many thousands of deities come to listen to the discourse.
148. Chachakka Sutta (The Six Sets of Six): This is an especially profound and penetrating discourse on the contemplation of all the factors of sense experience as not-self.
149. Mahāsaḷāyatanika Sutta (The Greater Discourse on the Sixfold Base): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* discusses how wrong view about the six kinds of sense experience leads to future bondage, while right view about them leads to liberation.
150. Nagaravindeyya Sutta (To the Nagaravindans): In this *sutta*, the *Buddha* explains to a group of Brahmin householders what kinds of ascetics and Brahmins should be venerated.
151. Piṇḍapātapārisuddhi Sutta (The Purification of Almsfood): This *sutta* contains a discourse by the *Buddha* to Venerable Sāriputta on how a *Bhikkhu* should review himself to make himself worthy of almsfood.
152. Indriyabhāvanā Sutta (The Development of the Faculties): Here, the *Buddha* rejects the methods of the Brahmin Pārāsariya for subduing the senses and expounds His own methods.

Saṃyutta Nikāya

Overview

The *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Kindred Sayings) contains 2,889 dialogues, discourses, and sayings, in prose and verse, which deal with either a particular doctrine or a specific person. The *Saṃyutta Nikāya* ranks as one of the most inspiring compilations in the Pāli Canon, showing the *Buddha* in His full magnificence as the peerless “teacher of gods and men.”

Textual Analysis²⁹

The *Saṃyutta Nikāya* is divided into five sections, or divisions (*vagga*), which, again, are subdivided into fifty-six groups (*saṃyutta*). The first *vagga* is named after its literary form, the rest according to the contents of the respective first *saṃyutta*:

1. Sagāthavagga “division containing verses”;
2. Nidānavagga “division (explaining) the *nidāna*³⁰ (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)”;
3. Khandhavagga “division (explaining) the five aggregates (*khandha*)”;
4. Saḷāyatanavagga “division (explaining) the six sense organs with their objects”;
5. Mahāvagga “great division.”

The number of *saṃyuttas* found in a *vagga* is about ten. The *saṃyuttas* are, again, subdivided as, for example, the Khandhasaṃyutta of the *Khandhavagga*, into a Mūla-panṇāsa, Majjhima-panṇāsa, and Upari-panṇāsa, “basic,” “middle,” and “further” (division) of fifty, respectively, each containing fifty *suttas* grouped together in five *vaggas* with ten *suttas*.

It is not easy to get a clear picture of the full text of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, which is almost twice as long as that of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, with one hundred against sixty-four *bhaṇavāras*. As a result, the manuscripts tend to abbreviate *vaggas* 2—5 considerably, though not in a uniform way. Due to this lack of uniformity, the Sinhalese and Burmese manuscripts of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* almost look like copies of two different texts.

Equally obscure is the actual number of dialogues, discourses, and sayings in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*. According to tradition, there should be 7,762, but only 2,889 have been counted in the European edition. The reason for this uncertainty is that the manuscripts often simply have key words, which are to be expanded into complete *suttas*, but without clear instructions on how to do this.

Consequently, this type of manuscript tradition is completely different from the one found in the first two *Nikāyas*, where the text is given in full, and only passages repeated verbally have been omitted at times. The *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, on the other hand, can be shrunk into a skeleton to be expanded again starting from the key words.³¹

The greater *vaggas* are arranged in a systematic way. The *Nidānavagga* contains the *paṭiccasamuppāda*, “(discourse on) Dependent Origination.” This is followed by the *Khandhavagga*, which discusses the *khandhas* “aggregates.” This is the first attempt in the *Tipiṭaka* that tries to give a systematization of the Teaching. Perhaps this is the reason behind the name of the *Nikāya*, “connected discourses,” or “discourses grouped together,” because texts of similar content were assembled and arranged side by side.

This, then, is as different from the *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* as is the form of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* texts. For, in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the Teaching of the

²⁹ This section is adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 35—38.

³⁰ *Nidāna* “foundation, occasion; source, origin, cause; reason, reference, subject.”

³¹ Similarly, the *mātikā*, “matrices,” of the *Kathāvatthu* is expanded by Moggallitissaputta.

Buddha is no longer necessarily embedded in a story. The intention to present the preaching of every text as a unique event is completely missing in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Although the formula for the beginning is also used in the mostly very short *suttas* in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, though rarely also the one for the end, in between, there are often only enumerations of dogmatic concepts.

Nevertheless, occasionally the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* has text that might fit well into the *Majjhima Nikāya*, as does the *Cittasaṃyutta*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya* IV 281, 11—304, 26, which relates different events in the life of the householder Citta, who was a lay follower of the *Buddha* for thirty years. It is noteworthy that Venerable Isidatta, while instructing Citta, refers to and actually quotes from the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Quotations of this kind seem to occur only in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* and the *Anguttara Nikāya*.

More complicated is the relation of the *Satipaṭṭhāna-saṃyutta*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya* V 141—192, to the *satipaṭṭhāna suttas* found in *Dīgha Nikāya* no. 22, *Mahāsatiipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, and *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 10, *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, which deserve a detailed study, because it seems that, sometimes, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* has preserved smaller parts from which larger units were built, or pieces of texts, which, for some reason, were not incorporated into the larger *suttas*.

Some parts of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* contain passages hardly related to Buddhism, such as *Mātugāmasaṃyutta*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya* IV 246, 2—250, 28, “(texts) on women grouped together” in the *Salāyatanavagga*, for this is, rather, some kind of *strīdharmā* “behavior for women.” The *Nāgasamāyutta*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya* III 240, 16—246, 6 “(texts) on *nāgas*³² grouped together” in the *Khandhavagga* is important for an aspect of ancient Indian religion about which not much is known.

The first part of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Sagāthavagga*, is completely different from the *vaggas* described so far, but rather similar, in some respects, to the *Sutta Nipāta*. The most important part of the text are the verses. These sometimes also occur in other parts of the *Tiṭṭaka*. The verses of the *Vangīsasaṃyutta*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya* I 185, 3—196, 27, are attributed to this very monk in *Theragāthā* 1209—1262, etc.

Parts of the *Sagāthavagga* seem to be very old, actually very near the Vedic texts, as in the section where Sakka fights the Asuras in the *Sakkasaṃyutta*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya* I 216, 4—240, 4. One contest is of particular interest, when Sakka and the king of the Asuras, Vepacitti, fight each other with well formulated verses (*subhāsita*), *Saṃyutta Nikāya* I 222, 21—224, 14, in the presence of referees (*pārisajja*).

The most prominent part of the *Sagāthavagga* is the *Dhajagga Sutta*, which contains the *iti’pi so*-formula.³³ This text, which lay practitioners know by heart even in the present day, contains an archaic text on the *pavāraṇā*,³⁴ explained in *Mahāvagga* IV *Pavāraṇakkhandhaka*, *Vinaya* I 159, 22—160, 2.

³² *Nāga* “snake, serpent; dragon.” In Hindu and Buddhist mythology, *nāgas* are members of a class of semidivine beings, half human and half serpentine. They are considered to be a strong, handsome race who can assume either human or wholly serpentine form. They are regarded as being potentially dangerous but, in some ways, are superior to humans. (This footnote is taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.)

³³ “Such, indeed, ...”, as in *Iti’pi so bhagavā araham*: ... “Such, indeed, is the Exalted One: ...”

³⁴ *Pavāraṇā*, a ceremony at the termination of the rainy season (*vassa*).

The form of texts developed in the *Sagāthavagga* has also been developed in the *Jātakas*.

It is impossible to determine why a collection of texts so different as the *Sagāthavagga*, on the one hand, and the remaining parts of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, on the other hand, have been combined.

It has been observed that many of the *suttas* of the *Samyutta Nikāya* were delivered at Sāvattihī. Therefore, it has been suggested that this collection may have been brought together at this place.

Synopsis³⁵

1. Sagātha Vagga (Division Containing Verses)

1. Devata Samyutta: Questions of *devas*.
2. Devaputta: Questions of the sons of *devas*.
3. Kosala: Anecdotes of King Pasenadi of Kosala.
4. Māra: Māra's hostile acts against the *Buddha* and His disciples.
5. Bhikkhunī: Māra's unsuccessful seduction of *Bhikkhunīs* and his arguments with them.
6. Brahmā: Brahmā Sahampati requests the *Buddha* to preach the *Dhamma* to the world.
7. Brāhmaṇa: The Brahmin Bhāradvāja's encounter with the *Buddha* and his conversion.
8. Vangīsa: Venerable Vangīsa, the foremost poet among the *Bhikkhus*, tells of his eradication of lust.
9. Vana: Forest deities direct undeveloped *Bhikkhus* on the right path.
10. Yakkha: Encounters of the *Buddha* and *Bhikkhunīs* with demons.
11. Sakka: The *Buddha* enumerates the qualities of Sakka (= Indra), King of the Gods.

2. Nidāna Vagga (Division [Explaining] the *Nidāna*)

12. Nidāna Samyutta: Explanation of the doctrine of Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).
13. Abhisamaya: The encouragement to attain penetration of the *Dhamma*.
14. Dhātu: Description of physical, mental, and abstract elements (*dhātu*).
15. Anamatagga: On the "incalculable beginning" (of *samsāra*).
16. Kassapa: Exhortation of Venerable Kassapa.
17. Lābhasakkāra: "Gains, favors, and flattery."
18. Rāhula: The instructing of Venerable Rāhula.
19. Lakkhaṇa: Questions of Venerable Lakkhaṇa on hungry ghosts (*petas*).
20. Opamma: Various points of *Dhamma* illustrated by similes.

³⁵ The descriptions in this synopsis are adapted from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Śri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]), pp. 20—24.

21. Bhikkhu: Admonitions of the *Buddha* and Venerable Moggallāna to the *Bhikkhus*.

3. Khandha Vagga (Division [Explaining] the Five Aggregates)

22. Khandha Saṃyutta: The aggregates (*khandha*), physical and mental, that constitute the “individual.”
23. Rādhā: Questions of Venerable Rādhā.
24. Diṭṭhi: Wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) arise from clinging to the aggregates.
25. Okkantika: Entering the Path through confidence (*saddhā*) and through wisdom (*paññā*).
26. Uppāda: Arising of the aggregates leads to suffering (*dukkha*).
27. Kilesa: Defilements arise from the sixfold sense base and sense-consciousness.
28. Sāriputta: Venerable Sāriputta answers Venerable Ānanda’s questions concerning the calming of the senses.
29. Nāga: Enumeration of four kinds of *nāgas* (serpents).
30. Supaṇṇa: Enumeration of four kinds of *garudas* (magical birds).
31. Gandhabbakāya: Description of the *gandhabbas* (celestial musicians).
32. Valāhaka: Description of the *valāhakas* (cloud spirits).
33. Vacchagotta: The wandering ascetic Vacchagotta’s metaphysical questions.
34. Samādhi: Enumeration of the four types of practitioners of the *jhānas* (meditative absorptions).

4. Saḷāyatana Vagga

(Division [Explaining] the Six Sense Organs with Their Objects)

35. Saḷāyatana Saṃyutta: The sixfold sense base (*saḷāyatana*) and the correct attitude towards it.
36. Vedanā: The three kinds of feeling (*vedanā*) and the correct attitude towards them.
37. Mātugāma: The destinies of women according to their qualities.
38. Jambukhādaka: Questions of the wandering ascetic Jambukhādaka to Venerable Sāriputta.
39. Sāmandaka: Questions of the wandering ascetic Sāmandaka to Venerable Sāriputta.
40. Moggallāna: Venerable Moggallāna explains the meditative absorptions (*jhāna*) to the *Bhikkhus*.
41. Citta: Senses and sense-objects are not intrinsically evil, only the unwholesome desires that arise through their contact.
42. Gāmaṇi: Definitions of “wrathful” and “kindly.”
43. Asankhata: The unconditioned (*nibbāna*).
44. Avyākata: Speculative questions posed by King Pasenadi to Venerables Khemā, Anuruddha, Sāriputta, and Moggallāna.

5. Mahā Vagga (Great Division)

45. Magga Saṃyutta: The Noble Eightfold Path: (1) right understanding; (2) right thought; (3) right speech; (4) right action; (5) right livelihood; (6) right effort; (7) right mindfulness; and (8) right concentration.
46. Bojjhanga: The Seven Factors of Enlightenment: (1) mindfulness; (2) investigation (of truth); (3) energy; (4) joy; (5) tranquility; (6) concentration; and (7) equanimity.
47. Satipaṭṭhāna: The Four Foundations of Mindfulness: mindful contemplation of: (1) of the body; (2) of feelings; (3) of the state of the mind; and (4) of the contents of the mind.
48. Indriya: The Five Faculties: (1) confidence (*saddhā*); (2) energy (*virīya*); (3) mindfulness (*sati*); (4) concentration (*samādhi*); and (5) wisdom (*paññā*).
49. Sammappadhāna: The Four Right Efforts: the fourfold effort to put forth the energy, to prod the mind, and to struggle: (1) to prevent unarisen unwholesome mental states from arising; (2) abandon unwholesome mental states that have already arisen; (3) to develop wholesome mental states that have not yet arisen; and (4) to maintain and perfect wholesome mental states that have already arisen.
50. Bala: The Five Powers (the same as the Five Faculties above): (1) confidence; (2) energy; (3) mindfulness; (4) concentration; and (5) wisdom.
51. Iddhipāda: The Four Psychic Powers: (1) will (*chanda*); (2) energy (*virīya*); (3) thought (*citta*); and (4) investigation (*vimaṃsā*).
52. Anuruddha: Supernormal powers attained by Venerable Anuruddha through mindfulness.
53. Jhāna: The four meditative absorptions (of the fine-material sphere [*rūpajjhāna*]).
54. Ānāpāna: Mindfulness of breathing.
55. Sotāpatti: Description of a Stream-Winner (*Sotāpanna*).
56. Sacca: The Four Noble Truths: (1) the truth of suffering (*dukkha*); (2) of its origin (*samudaya*); (3) of its cessation (*nirodha*); and (4) of the path (*magga*) leading to its cessation.

Anguttara Nikāya

Overview

The *Anguttara Nikāya* (Numerical Sayings³⁶) contains 2,344 *suttas* arranged numerically. There are eleven classified sections (*nipāta*) or groups, the subject of the first being single items, followed by groups of two items, and so on to the final group of eleven items.

³⁶ Also translated as “Gradual Sayings.” In the Commentaries, the *Anguttara Nikāya* is occasionally referred to as *Ekuttara Nikāya*, “the collection [of sayings] increasing by one.” This agrees with the Northern Buddhist tradition, where the name of this collection is *Ekottarāgama* (or *Ekottarikāgama*).

Textual Analysis³⁷

The name *The Anguttara* is difficult to explain grammatically, though generally understood as “one item more, in addition,” which is a translation justified by the tradition: *eka-eka-angātirekavasena* “always one item more.” It is used side by side with *Ekuttara*, which means “one more.” The corresponding translation, however, does not apply for *Dīgha Nikāya*, no. 34, *Dasuttara Sutta* (Expanding Decades) “the highest number of which is ten,” although this word may have been the model for the formation of the word *Anguttara*.

The subdivisions are designated by the term *nipāta*, which is used this way only in Buddhist texts,³⁸ thus: *Ekakanipāta*, etc., “chapter containing the ones.”

Strictly speaking, the numerical arrangement works only from *Ekaka-* to *Pañcaka-nipāta*, because the number necessary for the chapters on six and higher is sometimes reached only by adding up groups of 3+3 or 5+4, or even 3+3+3+2 items in the case of the *Ekādasakanipāta*.

The exact structure of the *Anguttara Nikāya* is difficult to determine. Again, the original number of *suttas* is 9,557 against the 2,344 actually counted. Inasmuch as there are some old manuscripts from the 16th century, which sometimes have a text worded slightly differently from the printed editions, for example, in the introductory formulas, it would be useful to check the structure of the *Anguttara Nikāya* against this evidence.

Originally, it seems, the *Anguttara Nikāya* had only ten *nipātas*. This can be deduced from the fact that, at the end of the *Dasakanipāta*, not only groups of ten items occur, as the title implies, but also groups of twenty, thirty, and forty items, which is typical for the last chapter of a text. Thus, the structure of the *Anguttara Nikāya* would repeat the one of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, no. 34, *Dasuttara Sutta*, on a large scale.

Structuring texts on numerical principles was a widespread practice in ancient India. The third *Aṅga* of the Jain canon, *Thāṇaṅga/Stānaṅga*, is arranged, like the *Anguttara Nikāya*, from one to ten, and the fourth *Aṅga*, *Samavāyaṅga*, from one to one million. Similar structures are found in the *Mahābhārata*, such as the *Viduranṭivākya* in the *Udyogaparvan*.

Among the items treated in the *Ekakanipāta*, there are prominent persons, 42 monks (*Anguttara Nikāya* I 23, 16—25, 16), and 13 nuns (*Anguttara Nikāya* I 25, 17—31), among them no. 5, *Dhammadinnā* (*Anguttara Nikāya* I 25, 22), as the foremost among the *dhammakathikās* “preachers,” who has spoken *Majjhima Nikāya* no. 44, *Cūḷavedalla Sutta* (The Shorter Series of Questions and Answers), a rare instance of a discourse given by a woman. At the end, ten men and ten women are enumerated, who are prominent among the lay followers (*Anguttara Nikāya* I 25, 32—36, 27), among them *Khujjuttarā*, who had heard the *Itivuttaka* from the *Buddha*. The Commentary gives long stories on all these persons.

³⁷ This section is adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 38—41.

³⁸ Buddhist Sanskrit texts show that *nipāta* “section, chapter (of a book)” is interchangeable with *vagga* (Sanskrit *varga*) “a section or chapter of a canonical book.”

Some passages from the *Anguttara Nikāya* have found their way into other parts of the *Tipiṭaka*, such as the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta. Like both the *Samyutta Nikāya* and the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Anguttara Nikāya*, too, sometimes contains rather old *Vinaya* passages in, for example, the classification of *āpatti* “offense” (*Anguttara Nikāya* I 88, 1—10). Here, and in similar paragraphs, old material may sometimes be preserved from which the *Vinaya Pīṭaka* has been built. In other cases, the source of an *Anguttara Nikāya* paragraph may have been the *Vinaya*, such as the account of the establishment of the Order of Nuns found in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* (*Anguttara Nikāya* IV 274—279), which is the same as what is found in the *Vinaya* (II 253—256), because of the eight *garudhamma* “strict rules” for the nuns.

Interesting is the lament of Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, about the death of his wife, Queen Mallikā, and his consolation by the *Buddha* (*Anguttara Nikāya* III, 57, 1—19), for this reads as if preserved only to commemorate that queen. It is followed by a story of considerable interest for cultural history. After the death of his wife, Queen Bhaddā, King Muṇḍa refuses to eat or take a bath, and tries to preserve the corpse of his wife in oil (*Anguttara Nikāya* III 57—62). Only after being instructed by the *Buddha* about the vanity of his plan does he have her cremated and even builds a *stūpa* for her (*Anguttara Nikāya* III 62, 27).

Further, the four kinds of poets enumerated at *Anguttara Nikāya* II 320, 11—13, may be mentioned here.

On the other hand, it is worthwhile to point out important items of the *Dhamma* not mentioned in the *Anguttara Nikāya*, such as the four *pubbanimittāni*,³⁹ the Four Noble Truths, etc. The *paṭiccasamuppāda* “(teaching on) Dependent Origination,” with its twelve links, is missing, since it would not fit into a numerical structure ending with eleven.

Structurally, the four *Nikāyas* can be divided into two groups. The collections of longer texts in the *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*, without any recognizable order, are quite different from the collections of comparatively brief texts in the *Samyutta Nikāya* and *Anguttara Nikāya*, where a more systematic approach in arranging the texts seems to have been envisaged. Further, the last two *Nikāyas* seem to be much more open to enlargement, because it is rather easy to insert texts that fit, either, according to their content, into the *Samyutta Nikāya*, or, according to the number of items, into the *Anguttara Nikāya*.

However, too many questions have to be investigated yet for conclusions about the structure of the four *Nikāyas* discussed so far, such as, for example, the direction of movement of texts perhaps starting from the short *suttas*, which could be absorbed into the long ones. Moreover, a comparison with the canon of the Jains might show that the longer *suttas* in the *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* are structurally much more typically Buddhist than the shorter texts in the *Samyutta Nikāya* and *Anguttara Nikāya*.

³⁹ Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit *pūrva-nimitta* “advance sign,” prognosticating something that is about to happen in the future. Used, for example, in reference to the thirty-two signs that preceded and forecast the birth of the *Buddha*; also used in reference to dreams that foretell future events, as in King Suddhodana’s dream predicting his son’s renunciation of the world, and in reference to a deity that is about to “fall.”

And, lastly, it should be kept in mind that, originally, the texts may have been arranged quite differently, when the earlier division of the Buddhist texts into *angas* “limb, part” was still valid.

Synopsis⁴⁰

1. Ekaka Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) the mind: concentrated/unconcentrated, trained/untrained, and cultivated/uncultivated; (2) exertion; (3) diligence; (4) the *Buddha*; (5) Venerable Sāriputta; (6) Venerable Moggallāna; (7) Venerable Mahākassapa; (8) views: right/wrong; (9) concentration: right/wrong.
2. Duka Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) two kinds of *kamma*, either producing results in this life or leading to rebirth; (2) cause of origin of good and evil; (3) hopes and desires; (4) gain and longevity; (5) two kinds of gifts (that of material things and that of *Dhamma*); (6) two assemblies of *Bhikkhus*; (7) those who have realized/not realized the Four Noble Truths; (8) those who live/do not live in harmony.
3. Tika Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) three offenses: of body, of speech, and of mind; (2) three praiseworthy acts: generosity, renunciation, and maintenance of parents; (3) exertion to: checking the growth of unarisen unwholesome (evil) mental states, developing unarisen wholesome (good) mental states, and removing arisen unwholesome (evil) mental states; (4) heretical views: that pleasant and painful and neither pleasant nor painful experiences are caused by previous actions, that these experiences are providential, and that these experiences are causeless.
4. Catukka Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) undisciplined persons lack conduct, concentration, insight, and emancipation; (2) the ignorant increase demerit by praising the unworthy, blaming the worthy, rejoicing when one should not rejoice, and not rejoicing when one should rejoice; (3) four kinds of persons: neither wise nor pious, not wise but pious, wise but not pious, and both wise and pious; (4) *Bhikkhus* should remain content with their robes, alms, dwelling-places, and medicines; (5) four kinds of happiness: living in a suitable environment, association with a well-developed person, self-realization, and accumulated merit in the past; (6) the four “divine abodes”: loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity; (7) four qualities guarding a *Bhikkhu* against lapsing: observation of morality (*sīla*), control of the sense-doors, moderation in eating, and constant mindfulness; (8) four ways of self-concentration: for a happy condition in this life, for knowledge and insight, for mindfulness and self-possession, and for destruction of the defilements (*kilesa*); (9) four persons fostering hatred, hypocrisy, and gains and honors other than connected with the *Dhamma*; (10) four mistaken views: impermanence for permanence, pain for pleasure, non-self for self, and impurity for purity; (11) four faults of ascetics and Brahmins: drinking intoxicating drinks (liquor, alcohol), addiction to sense pleasures, accepting money, and earning one’s

⁴⁰ The descriptions in this synopsis are adapted from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]), pp. 24—27.

livelihood by unethical means; (12) four fields in merit-bringing happiness: rightly believing the *Buddha* to be enlightened, the *Dhamma* as well-expounded, the *Sangha* as well-established, and the disciples as being free from impurities; (13) four ways of living together: the vile with the vile, the vile with the good, the good with the vile, and the good with the good; (14) offering food gives the recipient: long life, beauty, happiness, and physical strength; (15) four conditions for worldly prosperity: persistent effort, protecting one's earnings, good friendship, and balanced livelihood; (16) four conditions for spiritual prosperity: confidence, morality, chastity, and wisdom; (17) four families of snakes to which one should extend loving-kindness; (18) four right efforts; (19) four unthinkableables: the sphere of a *Buddha*, the *jhānas* (meditative absorptions), *kamma* and result (*vipāka*), and speculating about the origin of the world; (20) four places of pilgrimage: to the sites of: the *Buddha*'s birth, Enlightenment, First Sermon, and passing away; (21) four kinds of beneficial/non-beneficial speech: truthfulness/lying, non-backbiting/backbiting, gentle/harsh, and thoughtful/frivolous; (22) four essential qualities: confidence (*saddhā*), energy (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*), and the four elements (*dhātu*); (23) four persons worthy of monuments: the *Buddha*, *Pacceka Buddhas*, *Arahants*, and "Wheel-turning" monarchs; and (24) *Bhikkhus* should not retire to the forest if given to: lust, malice, envy, or lacking common-sense.

5. Pañcaka Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) five good characteristics of a disciple: reverence, modesty, abstinence from unskillful acts, energy, and wisdom; (2) five mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*): desire for gratification of the senses, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and skeptical doubt; (3) five subjects of meditation: the impure, non-self, death, disagreeableness of food, and not finding delight in the world; (4) five evil qualities: not free from defilements (passions), hatred, delusion, hypocrisy, and malice; and (5) five good acts: loving actions of body, speech, and mind; observance of virtue; and holding right views.
6. Chakka Nipāta: This section deals with the sixfold duty of *Bhikkhus*: abstaining from distracting work, arguments, sleep, and company; humility; and association with the wise.
7. Sattaka Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) seven kinds of wealth: reverence, good conduct, modesty, abstinence from unskillful acts, learning, renunciation, and wisdom; and (2) seven kinds of attachment: requesting favors, hatred, mistaken confidence, doubt, pride, worldly experience, and ignorance.
8. Aṭṭhaka Nipāta: This section deals with eight causes of mindfulness/almsgiving/earthquakes.
9. Navaka Nipāta: This section deals with: (1) nine contemplations: impurity, death, disagreeableness of food, indifference to the world, impermanence, suffering resulting from impermanence, non-self, renunciation, and equanimity; and (2) nine kinds of persons: those who have trodden the four paths to *nibbāna* and who have experienced the fruits, together with the worldling.
10. Dasaka Nipāta: This section deals with ten contemplations: (1) impermanence; (2) non-self; (3) death; (4) disagreeableness of food; (5) indifference to the world; (6—

- 9) bone and four stages of a decomposing corpse: worm-infested, black with decay, fissured through decay, and bloated; and (10) ten kinds of purification: through right knowledge, right liberation, and the eight steps of the Noble Eightfold Path.
11. Ekadasaka Nipāta: This section deals with eleven kinds of happiness/ways to *nibbāna*/good and bad characteristics of a herdsman and a *Bhikkhu*.

Khuddaka Nikāya

Overview

The *Khuddaka Nikāya* (Smaller Collection) is subdivided into fifteen books. This *Nikāya* appears to have been put together gradually and contains a series of miscellaneous books, which were probably incorporated into the Canon after the other *Nikāyas* were closed.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. <i>Khuddaka Pāṭha</i> | (Shorter Texts) |
| 2. <i>Dhammapada</i> | (The Way of Truth) |
| 3. <i>Udāna</i> | (Paeans of Joy) |
| 4. <i>Itivuttaka</i> | (“Thus Said” Discourses) |
| 5. <i>Sutta Nipāta</i> | (Collected Discourses) |
| 6. <i>Vimāna Vatthu</i> | (Stories of Celestial Mansions) |
| 7. <i>Peta Vatthu</i> | (Stories of <i>Petas</i>) |
| 8. <i>Theragāthā</i> | (Psalms of the Brothers) |
| 9. <i>Therīgāthā</i> | (Psalms of the Sisters) |
| 10. <i>Jātaka</i> | (Birth Stories of the <i>Bodhisatta</i>) |
| 11. <i>Niddesa</i> | (Expositions) |
| 12. <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i> | (Book on Analytical Knowledge) |
| 13. <i>Apadāna</i> | (Lives of <i>Arahants</i>) |
| 14. <i>Buddhavaṃsa</i> | (History of the <i>Buddhas</i>) |
| 15. <i>Cariyā Piṭaka</i> | (Modes of Conduct) |

Textual Analysis⁴¹

As noted above, the *Khuddaka Nikāya* consists of fifteen very heterogeneous works of widely varying length, the shortest being the *Khuddaka Pāṭha*, with less than 9 printed pages, in contrast to the *Niddesa*, with over 500 pages. Only three collections contain *suttas* similar to those of the first four *Nikāyas*, nine are collections of verses, one is a commentary, one a philosophical text, and the *Khuddaka Pāṭha* has been assembled from short pieces found elsewhere in the canon.

⁴¹ This section is adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 41—43.

The actual number of texts found in this *Nikāya* is not uniform in the Theravādin countries, for, in Myanmar (Burma), *Nettipakaraṇa*, *Peṭakopadesa*, and *Milindapañha* have also been added to this *Nikāya*.

There is a long history about the uncertainty of the contents of this *Nikāya*. This uncertainty also prevails within the Theravādin School itself, the only school to possess a complete *Khuddaka Nikāya*. The earliest lists of texts contained in this *Nikāya* are found in the description of the canon at the beginning of the commentaries on the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, *Sutta Piṭaka*, and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. While the *Vinaya* commentary lists fifteen texts, the *Abhidhamma* commentary only lists fourteen without elaborating on this — it is probably the *Khuddaka Pāṭha* that is missing.

The most important discussion of the contents of this *Nikāya*, however, is found in the *Sumangalavilāsinī*, the Commentary on the *Dīgha Nikāya*, because it is said here that the *Dīgha*- and *Majjhima-bhāṇakas* adhere to a tradition in which the texts have been recited in a sequence different from the one finally accepted by the Theravādin School. Consequently, there are two lists:

Standard sequence	Sequence in the <i>Dīgha</i> -/ <i>Majjhima-bhāṇakas</i>
1. <i>Khuddaka Pāṭha</i>	1. <i>Jātaka</i>
2. <i>Dhammapada</i>	2. <i>Niddesa</i>
3. <i>Udāna</i>	3. <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i>
4. <i>Itivuttaka</i>	4. <i>Sutta Nipāta</i>
5. <i>Sutta Nipāta</i>	5. <i>Dhammapada</i>
6. <i>Vimāna Vatthu</i>	6. <i>Udāna</i>
7. <i>Peta Vatthu</i>	7. <i>Itivuttaka</i>
8. <i>Theragāthā</i>	8. <i>Vimāna Vatthu</i>
9. <i>Therīgāthā</i>	9. <i>Peta Vatthu</i>
10. <i>Jātaka</i>	10. <i>Theragāthā</i>
11. <i>Niddesa</i>	11. <i>Therīgāthā</i>
12. <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i>	12. <i>Cariyā Piṭaka</i>
13. <i>Apadāna</i>	13. <i>Apadāna</i>
14. <i>Buddhavaṃsa</i>	14. <i>Buddhavaṃsa</i>
15. <i>Cariyā Piṭaka</i>	

The *Khuddaka Pāṭha* is not accepted in either the *Dīgha*- or *Majjhima-bhāṇakas*. Both call the *Khuddaka Nikāya* the *Khuddakagantha* (*Sumangalavilāsinī* 15, 15.29), but, while the *Dīgha-bhāṇakas* include it in the *Abhidhamma*, the *Majjhima-bhāṇakas* place it in the *Sutta Piṭaka*.

Yet a different sequence seems to be found in the Commentary on the *Anguttara Nikāya*, when the disappearance of the *sāsana* is described. First, the end of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is lost, and then, the canon is described here as disappearing in the reverse order. There is no trace of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, because, after the *Anguttara Nikāya*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, and *Dīgha Nikāya* disappear, then only the

Jātaka and *Vinaya* are available at a certain stage, which leaves the affiliation of the *Jātaka* open. Furthermore, there are still other relevant, partly difficult, passages in the Commentaries.

Synopsis⁴²

1. *Khuddaka Pāṭha* (Shorter Texts): The *Khuddaka Pāṭha* contains the following texts:

- *Saraṇattaya*: The thrice-repeated “Refuge Formula” of all Buddhists.⁴³
- *Dasasikkhāpada*: This is a list of the Ten Precepts (*dasa-sīla*, *dasa-sikkhāpada*⁴⁴) binding on all novices (*sāmaṇera*).
- *Dvattiṃsākāra*: A list of the thirty-two constituent body parts.
- *Kumārapañha*: A sort of catechism of ten questions for novices.
- *Mangala Sutta*: A poem on the “great blessings” (*mangala*).
- *Ratana Sutta*: A poem on the “Three Jewels”⁴⁵ (*tiratana*) — the *Buddha*, the *Dhamma*, and the *Sangha*.
- *Tirokuḍḍa Sutta*: A poem on the offerings to be made to the spirits of departed relatives.

⁴² The descriptions in this synopsis are adapted from Russell Webb (editor), *An Analysis of the Pāli Canon* (Wheel publication no. 217/220) (second edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1991]), pp. 28—39. Material has also been taken from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 43—64.

⁴³ The formula runs as follows (each repeated three times, as indicated):

<i>Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa.</i>	Homage to the Worthy One, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.
<i>Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa.</i>	Homage to the Worthy One, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.
<i>Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa.</i>	Homage to the Worthy One, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.
<i>Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.</i>	I go to the Buddha for Refuge. I go to the Dhamma for Refuge. I go to the Sangha for Refuge.
<i>Dutiyampi, Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Dutiyampi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Dutiyampi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.</i>	A second time, I go to the Buddha for Refuge. A second time, I go to the Dhamma for Refuge. A second time, I go to the Sangha for Refuge.
<i>Tatiyampi, Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Tatiyampi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi. Tatiyampi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.</i>	A third time, I go to the Buddha for Refuge. A third time, I go to the Dhamma for Refuge. A third time, I go to the Sangha for Refuge.

⁴⁴ *Sikkhāpada* means “steps in training, moral rules.” It is synonymous here with *sīla*. *Dasa* means “ten.”

⁴⁵ Also known as the “Triple Gem.”

- Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta: A poem on the storing up of true treasure.
- Mettā Sutta: A poem on loving-kindness (*mettā*).

Only the Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta is without parallel elsewhere in the canon. This seems to indicate that it is an old independent text only contained in this collection in the *Piṭaka*. The remaining texts are found in the same sequence in the *Paritta*,⁴⁶ where there are two texts found between the Kumārapañha and the Mangala Sutta. In the *Khuddaka Pāṭha*, on the other hand, the Tirokuḍḍa Sutta and the Nidhikaṇḍa Sutta have been put between *Parittas* nos. 8 and 9. Therefore, it can be assumed that both the *Khuddaka Pāṭha* and the *Paritta* originated by expanding a common predecessor in different directions. In contrast to the *Khuddaka Pāṭha*, the *Paritta* is still widely used in Theravādin countries.

2. *Dhammapada* (The Way of Truth): A great part of the *Dhammapada* is traditionally learned by heart by every Buddhist in Theravādin countries. It consists of 423 verses arranged in 26 *vaggas*.

The *Dhammapada* was the first Pāli text ever critically edited in Europe by the Danish pioneer of Pāli studies Viggo Fausbøll (1821—1908). Many editions and still more translations have followed.

More than half of the 423 verses found in the *Dhammapada* have parallels in other collections in other Buddhist schools, frequently also in non-Buddhist texts. The interrelation of different versions has been obscured by constant contamination in the course of text transmission. This is particularly true of one of the Buddhist Sanskrit parallels, the *Udānavarga*. The *Udānavarga* was originally a text corresponding to the Pāli *Udāna*. By adding verses from the *Dhammapada*, it was transformed into a *Dhammapada* parallel in the course of time, which is a rare event in the evolution of Buddhist literature.

The verses of the *Dhammapada* mainly contain a series of wise observations or general truths, many of which have hardly any relationship to Buddhism proper, being, rather, of universal applicability. Linguistically, some of the verses seem to be rather old.

As in the case of the *Jātaka* tales, stories have been included (invented) by the commentators to illustrate the occasion on which the verses of the *Dhammapada* were spoken by the *Buddha*.

3. *Udāna* (Paeans of Joy): The *Udāna* is a collection, in eight *vaggas*, of eighty *udānas* “Solemn Utterances, Paeans of Joy” of the *Buddha*. They are mostly in verse, and each is accompanied by a prose account of the circumstances that called it forth:

⁴⁶ A *paritta* is a “protective discourse.” What is being referred to here is a collection of twenty-two such discourses.

- Bodhi Vagga: This *vagga* describes certain events following the Enlightenment of the *Buddha*, including the famous discourse to Venerable Bāhiya that stresses living in the present moment.
- Mucalinda Vagga: This *vagga* is named after the Nāga king Mucalinda who shielded the *Buddha* with his (cobra) hood.
- Nanda Vagga: In this *vagga*, the *Buddha* convinces his half-brother Nanda of the worthlessness of worldly existence. This *vagga* also contains admonitions to the *Sangha*.
- Meghiya Vagga: In this *vagga*, ignoring the advice of the *Buddha*, Venerable Meghiya retires to a mango grove to practice meditation, but his mind is soon assailed by unhealthy thoughts. On returning to the *Buddha*, he is told that five factors should be cultivated by one with an undeveloped mind: (1) good friendship; (2) morality; (3) profitable conversation; (4) determination; and (5) insight. This *vagga* also contains the stories of Sundarī and the assault on Venerable Sāriputta by a *yakkha*.⁴⁷
- Soṇathera Vagga: This *vagga* contains an account of a visit of King Pasenadi to the *Buddha*, the discourse to the leper Suppabuddha, the elucidation of the eight characteristics of the *sāsana*, and an account of the first year of the life of Venerable Soṇa as a *Bhikkhu*.
- Jaccandha Vagga: This *vagga* contains the *Buddha*'s hint at His passing away, King Pasenadi's dialogue, and the story of the king who brought together men, blind from birth, to feel and describe an elephant — the purpose of this story is to illustrate the partial realization of truth.
- Cūḷa Vagga: This *vagga* contains the famous definition of *nibbāna* as being unborn, unbecome, unmade, uncompounded. It also contains an account of the *Buddha*'s last meal and His admonition to Venerable Ānanda concerning Cunda the smith, as well as the visit to Pāṭaligāma, where the *Buddha* enunciated the five advantages of leading a pure life and the five disadvantages of not doing so.

The *Udāna* belongs to those old texts already mentioned in the *navangas*.⁴⁸ As noted above, the *Udāna* has eight *vaggas* with ten *udānas* each. The occasion for such an *udāna* is given in the prose introduction, which ends by “at this moment (the *Buddha*) made this utterance,” followed by the verse. Thus, it does not seem to be

⁴⁷ In popular belief, a *yakkha* is a kind of ghost, goblin, or ogre. Cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Śri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), p. 244.

⁴⁸ This refers to a division of the canon that preceded the *tipiṭaka*, and its subdivisions, such as the *nikāyas*, etc. It was called *anga* “part,” of which there were three, then four, later nine, and in the Sanskrit tradition, twelve such parts. While the original division consisted of classes of texts, names of individual texts, such as *Itivuttaka*, were added in the course of time as the very early Buddhist literature began to grow. Soon, the use of the *anga* division seems to have been abandoned in favor of the *piṭaka* division. In the account of the First Council, only the subdivision of what later became the *tipiṭaka*, *nikāya* “collection of texts,” is mentioned. For more information, cf. Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 7—8.

impossible that there once was an *Udāna* having only verses such as those in the Sanskrit *Udānavarga*.

About one quarter of the prose texts have a parallel in other parts of the canon, and there seems to be some special affinity to *Vinaya* texts. Some of the concepts developed in the *Udāna* are fairly old and have counterparts in both Jainism and the Upanishads.

The formula at the end of the first *vagga* (*Udāna* I 10) *ayaṃ pi udāno vutto bhagavatā iti me sutam* (*Udāna* 9, 9), “this utterance, too, was spoken by the Blessed One; thus have I heard,” connects this text to the *Itivuttaka*. Although this phrase is preserved only here, it may have been the conclusion of all of the *udānas* at one time. For, the Commentary explains it as the end of the very first section (*Udāna* I 1), where it is no longer extant in the text, and states that it is found here only “in some books.”

4. *Itivuttaka* (“Thus Said” Discourses): The *Itivuttaka* is a collection of 122 short *suttas* in four *nipātas*, each accompanied with verses. The collection takes its name from the words usually introducing each set of verses: *iti vuccati* “thus, it is said.” The *Itivuttaka* contains the ethical teachings of the *Buddha*.

- Ekaka Nipāta: This *nipāta* contains three *vaggas*. Lust, ill will, delusion, wrath, spite, pride, ignorance, craving, schism, lying, and stinginess are condemned, and mindfulness, association with the wise, concord, mental peace, happiness, diligence, generosity, and loving-kindness are praised.
- Duka Nipāta: This *nipāta* contains two *vaggas*, elucidating guarding the sense-doors and moderation in eating, skillful actions, healthy habits and correct views, serenity and seclusion, shame and dread, the two aspects of *nibbāna*,⁴⁹ and the virtues of leading an energetic ascetic life.
- Tika Nipāta: This *nipāta* contains five *vaggas*, categorizing factors that are threefold: evil roots, elements, feelings, thirsts, cankers, etc., and proclaiming the ideal life of a *Bhikkhu*.
- Catukka Nipāta: This *nipāta* categorizes factors that are fourfold: necessities of a *Bhikkhu*, the Four Noble Truths, etc., and emphasizes the purity of mind for a *Bhikkhu*.

⁴⁹ The two aspects of *nibbāna* are: (1) the full extinction of defilements (*kilesa*), that is, “*nibbāna* WITH the groups of existence still remaining” (*sa upādi sesa nibbāna*), which takes place at the attainment of Arahantship, or perfect holiness; and (2) the full extinction of the groups of existence (the aggregates) (*khandha-parinibbāna*), that is “*nibbāna* WITHOUT the groups of existence still remaining” (*an upādi sesa nibbāna*), in other words, the coming to rest, or rather “the no-more-continuing,” of the psychophysical process of existence; this takes place at the death of an *Arahant*. Sometimes, both aspects take place simultaneously, that is, at the death of the *Arahant*. Cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), p. 124.

The *Itivuttaka* is similar to the *Udāna*, and both texts are always mentioned side by side in the list of *navanga*. In contrast to the *Udāna*, the prose and verse of the *Itivuttaka* form a conceptual unit, which brings these *suttas* near to the *Sagāthavagga* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*. The text is numerically arranged from *Eka-* to *Catukka-Nipāta*, which are subdivided into *vaggas* of about ten *suttas*.

It is noted in the Commentary that no place names are identified. The reason given is that all of the *suttas* were spoken at Kosambī and heard by the lay woman Khujjuttarā. If there is any truth in this tradition, which cannot be traced back beyond Dhammapāla's commentary, then it could have been collected and formalized in Kosambī in a way typical for this place, in contrast perhaps to, say, Sāvathī, where *evam me suttaṃ* was preferred. This, however, remains highly speculative.

At the end of the *Itivuttaka*, from *Tika Nipāta*, *Vagga* 4, onwards, the systematic formalization of *suttas* is discontinued. Therefore, it has been suggested that *Vagga* 4,⁵⁰ which draws material from the *Anguttara Nikāya*, is younger than the rest of this perhaps very old text.

5. *Sutta Nipāta* (Collected Discourses): The *Sutta Nipāta* comprises five *vaggas*, containing 71 *suttas* in all. The *suttas*, each containing from eight to fifty verses, are in verse with introductions in either verse or prose.⁵¹

1. Uraga Vagga (The Division of the Snake)

1. Uraga Sutta (The Snake's Skin): The *Bhikkhu* who discards all human passions — anger, hatred, craving, etc. — and is free from delusion and fear, is compared to a snake that has shed its skin.
2. Dhaniya Sutta (Dhaniya the Herdsman): The complacent “security” of a worldling is compared with the genuine security of the *Buddha*.
3. Khaggavisāṇa Sutta (The Rhinoceros Horn): The wandering life of a *Bhikkhu* is praised — family and social ties are to be avoided in view of their saṃsāric attachments, excepting the “good friend”⁵² (*kalyāṇa mitta*).
4. Kasibhāradvāja Sutta (The Farmer Bhāradvāja): Socially useful or mundane labor is contrasted with the no less important efforts of the *Buddha* striving for *nibbāna*.

⁵⁰ This *Vagga* is not found in the Chinese translation.

⁵¹ Venerable Hammalawa Saddhatissa's translation of the *Sutta Nipāta* (London: Curzon Press [1985]) has also been consulted for clarification concerning the content of individual *suttas*.

⁵² A *kalyāṇa mitta* “a noble (or good) friend” is one who is the mentor and friend of his pupil, wishing for the pupil's welfare and concerned about his or her spiritual progress. A *kalyāṇa mitta* is one who teaches him or her meditation, who teaches him or her *Dhamma*, who guides him or her on their spiritual journey, encouraging what is wholesome, noble, and beneficial and discouraging what is not wholesome, not noble, and not beneficial, in accordance with Buddhist principles. A *kalyāṇa mitta*, himself or herself, leads an exemplary life by putting into practice the teachings and forsaking lust, hatred, and false views — truly knowing, with a disciplined mind, clinging to nothing either in this life or the next.

5. Cunda Sutta (Cunda the Smith): The *Buddha* enumerates four kinds of *samaṇas*: (1) a *Buddha*, (2) an *Arahant*, (3) a conscientious *Bhikkhu*, and (4) a fraudulent *Bhikkhu*.
6. Parābhava Sutta (Downfall): The “causes of personal downfall” in the moral and spiritual domains are enumerated.
7. Vasala or Aggika Bhāradvāja Sutta (The Outcast): In refutation of the charge “outcast,” the *Buddha* explains that it is by actions, not lineage, that one becomes an outcast or a Brahmin.
8. Mettā Sutta (Discourse on Loving-Kindness): The constituents of the practice of loving-kindness (*mettā*) towards all beings.
9. Hemavata Sutta (Sātāgira and Hemavata): Here, two *yakkhas* who have their doubts about the qualities of the *Buddha* have their doubts resolved by Him. The *Buddha* continues by describing the path of deliverance from death.
10. Āḷavaka Sutta (Āḷavaka): The *Buddha* answers the questions of the *yakkha* Āḷavaka concerning happiness, understanding, and the path to *nibbāna*.
11. Vijava Sutta (Victory over Delusion): An analysis of the body into its (impure) constituent parts and the mention of the *Bhikkhu* who attains *nibbāna* through understanding the body’s true nature.
12. Muni Sutta (The Sage): The idealistic conception of a *muni* “sage” who leads a solitary life freed from the passions.

2. Cūḷa Vagga (The Shorter Division)

1. Ratana Sutta (Jewels Discourse): A hymn to the Three Jewels: The *Buddha*, the *Dhamma*, and the *Sangha*.
2. Āmagandha Sutta (Stench): The *Buddha* Kassapa refutes the brahmanic view of defilement through eating meat and states that defilement can only come about through an evil mind and corresponding actions.
3. Hiri Sutta (Shame): A dissertation on the nature of true friendship.
4. Mahāmangala Sutta (The Auspicious Performance): Thirty-eight blessings are enumerated in leading a pure life — starting with basic ethical injunctions and culminating in the realization of *nibbāna*.
5. Sūciloma Sutta (Sūciloma): In reply to the threatening attitude of the *yakkha* Sūciloma, the *Buddha* states that passion, hatred, doubt, etc., originate with the body, with desire, and with the concept of self.
6. Dhammacariya Sutta (The Good Life): A *Bhikkhu* should lead a just and pure life and should avoid those of a quarrelsome nature and those who are slaves of desire.
7. Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta (The Good Conduct of the Brahmins): The *Buddha* explains to some old and wealthy Brahmins the high moral standards of their ancestors and how they declined following their greed for the king’s wealth. As a result, they induced the king to offer animal sacrifice, etc., in order to acquire wealth and thus lost knowledge of the *Dhamma*.

8. Nāva Sutta (The Boat): Taking heed of the quality of the teacher, one should go to a learned and intelligent person in order to acquire a thorough knowledge of *Dhamma*.
9. Kiṃsīla Sutta (Right Conduct): This *sutta* deals with the path of a conscientious lay disciple. *Dhamma* should be one's first and last concern.
10. Uṭṭhāna Sutta (Arousing): An attack on idleness and laziness. Pierced by the arrow of suffering, one should not rest until all desire is eliminated.
11. Rāhula Sutta (Rāhula): The *Buddha* advises His son, the novice Rāhula, to respect those who are wise and to associate with them in order to live up to the principles of a recluse.
12. Vangīsa Sutta (Vangīsa): The *Buddha* assures Vangīsa that his late teacher, Nigrodhakappa, attained *nibbāna*.
13. Sammāparibbājanīya Sutta (The Correct Homeless Life): The correct path to be followed by a conscientious *Bhikkhu* disciple: non-attachment, eradication of the passions, understanding the nature of cyclic existence (*samsāra*).
14. Dhammika Sutta (Dhammika): The *Buddha* explains to the lay disciple Dhammika the respective duties of a *Bhikkhu* and a lay person, the latter being expected to keep the Five Precepts and observe *Uposatha* days.

3. Mahā Vagga (The Greater Division)

1. Pabbajjā Sutta (The Going Forth): King Bimbisāra of Magadha tempts the *Buddha* by offering to bestow wealth and power upon Him and asks about His lineage. The *Buddha* tells of His birth among the Sākyans of Kosala and that He has seen through the illusive nature of sensory pleasures.
2. Padhāna Sutta (The Striving): The graphic description of Māra's temptations immediately prior to the *Buddha's* Enlightenment.
3. Subhāsita Sutta (Good Words): The language of *Bhikkhus* should be well-spoken, pleasing, correct, and true.
4. Pūraḷāsa⁵³ Sutta (The Sacrificial Cake): The *Buddha* explains to the Brahmin Sundarika how one becomes worthy of the honor of receiving an offering.
5. Māgha Sutta (Māgha): The *Buddha* explains to the lay person Māgha how one becomes worthy of the honor of receiving an offering and elucidates the various kinds of blessings from offerings.
6. Sabhiya Sutta (Sabhiya): Sabhiya, a wandering ascetic, could not obtain answers to his questions from the six most famous teachers of the time. Hence, he approaches the *Buddha* and becomes a disciple after the *Buddha* satisfactorily answers his questions.
7. Sela Sutta (Sela): The Brahmin Sela converses with the *Buddha* and is converted along with his three hundred followers.

⁵³ This is also called the Sundarika-Bhāradvāja Sutta.

8. Salla Sutta (The Dart): Life is short, and all are subject to death, but the wise, who understand the nature of life, have no fears.
9. Vāseṭṭha Sutta (Vāseṭṭha): Two young men, Bhāradvāja and Vāseṭṭha, discuss the question of how one becomes a Brahmin: Bhāradvāja maintains that one is a Brahmin by birth, but Vāseṭṭha states that one becomes a Brahmin only through actions. The *Buddha* subsequently confirms that the latter view is correct.
10. Kokāliya Sutta (Kokāliya): The monk Kokāliya falsely accuses Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna of harboring evil desires. Subsequently, Kokāliya endures a painful end — through death and rebirth in a woeful state. The *Buddha* then enumerates the different hell realms and describes the punishment for slandering and backbiting.
11. Nālaka Sutta (Nālaka): An account of the sage Asita’s prediction concerning the future Buddha Gotama. The *Buddha* explains the highest state of wisdom to Asita’s nephew Nālaka.
12. Dvayatānupassanā Sutta (Origination and Cessation [of Suffering]): Suffering arises from grasping, ignorance, the five aggregates, desire, attachment, effort, food, etc.

4. Aṭṭhaka Vagga (The Division of the Eights)

1. Kāma Sutta (Sensory Pleasures): To avoid the unpleasant effects, one should always be thoughtful and avoid sensory pleasures. Abandoning them leads to the farther shore (*nibbāna*).
2. Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta (The Cave): In addition to the above, physical existence should also not be clung to if one is keen on attaining deliverance from *samsāra*.
3. Duṭṭhaṭṭhaka Sutta (Corruption): One who praises his own virtue and is tied to dogmatic views (which differ from person to person and sect to sect) lives a constricted life.⁵⁴ The sage,⁵⁵ however, remains self-effacing and independent of philosophical systems.
4. Suddhaṭṭhaka Sutta (Purity): Knowledge of philosophical systems cannot purify one, there being the tendency to become attached to one’s views and not let go of desire, thus, never attaining inward peace. The wise, however, are not misled by passion and do not cling to anything in *samsāra*.
5. Paramaṭṭhaka Sutta (Perfection): One should not cling to dogmatic views, seeing everything else as inferior. A true Brahmin does not and attains *nibbāna*.
6. Jarā Sutta (Decay): From selfishness come greed and regrets. The ideal *Bhikkhu*, a “homeless one,” is independent and does not seek purification through others.
7. Tissa Metteyya Sutta (Tissa Metteyya): The *Buddha* elucidates the kinds of undesirable effects that follow from sensory desire.

⁵⁴ Intolerant, inflexible, biased, narrow-minded, uncompromising, etc.

⁵⁵ One who is wise, prudent, flexible, open-minded, etc.

8. Pasūra Sutta (Disputation): The folly of debates where both sides insult or deride each other. Those who are defeated become resentful. Consequently, purification cannot result from such activity.
9. Māgandiya Sutta (Māgandiya): Again, the *Buddha* emphasizes to Māgandiya, a believer in purity through philosophy, that purity can result only from inner peace.
10. Purābheda Sutta (Qualities of a Sage): The conduct and characteristics of a true sage: freedom from craving, anger, desire, passion, and attachment, and always calm, thoughtful, and mentally equipoised.
11. Kalahavivāda Sutta (Disputes and Contention): Arguments and disputes arise from deeply held views, etc.
12. Cūḷaviyūha Sutta (Minor Causes of Contention): A description of the different philosophical schools, all contradicting one another without realizing that Truth is one.
13. Mahāviyūha Sutta (Major Causes of Contention): Philosophers only praise themselves and criticize others, but a true Brahmin remains indifferent to such dubious intellectual attainment and is thus calm and peaceful.
14. Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta (The Way to Bliss): The *Bhikkhu* should sever the root of evil and cravings, learn the *Dhamma*, be calm and meditative, avoid talking, indolence, etc., and strictly follow his prescribed duties.
15. Attadaṇḍa Sutta (Violent Conduct): The sage should be truthful, not deceitful, sober, free from greed and slander, energetic, and without desire for name and fame.
16. Sāriputta Sutta (Sāriputta): Again, this time in answer to Venerable Sāriputta's inquiry, the *Buddha* lays down the principles that should govern the life of a *Bhikkhu*.

5. Pārāyaṇa Vagga (The Division of the Way to the Beyond)

This division begins with a long prologue (*vatthugāthā*), which is followed by a series of dialogues (*pucchā*) between the *Buddha* and sixteen Brahmins: Ajita, Tissa Metteyya, Puṇṇaka, Mettagū, Dhotaka, Upasīva, Nanda, Hemaka, Todeyya, Kappa, Jatukaṇṇi, Bhadrāvudha, Udaya, Posāla, Mogharāja, and Pingiya. The dialogues all stress the necessity of eradicating desire, greed, attachment, philosophical views, sensory pleasures, and indolence, and of remaining aloof, independent, calm, mindful, and firm in *Dhamma* — in order to attain *nibbāna*. Finally, the *Pārāyaṇavagga* ends with an epilogue and Pingiya's praises of the way to the beyond.

The *Sutta Nipāta* begins with a collection of verses in the *Uragavagga* that could have also been included in the *Dhammapada*. The second text is the famous dialogue of the *Buddha* and the herdsman Dhaniya “the rich,” who is happy with the life of a householder, while the *Buddha* praises the freedom He gained by leaving His belongings behind. The person speaking a verse is indicated, for example, by *iti*

Dhaniyo gopo “thus Dhaniya the herdsman,” which, according to the Commentary, was introduced by the *sangītikāras* “those participating in the (First) Council.” Similarly, indications are given in the Indian epic the *Mahābhārata* such as *Bṛhadaśva uvāca* “Bṛhadaśva said.” This seems to be alien to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, however.

The *Cūlavagga* contains the Ratana Sutta and Mangala Sutta, which have also been included in the *Khuddaka Pāṭha*, together with the Mettā Sutta.

The first two texts in the *Mahāvagga* are verses referring to the life of the *Buddha*, describing His *pabbajjā* “leaving home to become an ascetic” and His struggle with Māra.

Other texts are true *suttas*, such as the Sela Sutta or the Vāsetṭha Sutta, which appear in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (nos. 92 and 98, respectively) as well. Further, many parallels are found in the structurally similar *Sagāthavagga* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, such as the *Vaṅgīsasāmyutta*, which contains the first part of the verses attributed to Vaṅgīsa in the *Theragāthā*, while the second part of these verses is shared with the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* II 12 Vaṅgīsa Sutta.

There are also parallels outside of the Theravādin canon, and a reference probably to a *Sutta Nipāta* text on the Asokan inscriptions, if the *munigāthā* and the *moneyasutta* mentioned on the Bairāt edict are really *Sutta Nipāta* I 12 Muni Sutta.

The *munigāthā* are also mentioned in an enumeration of texts in *Divyāvadāna* 20, 23, and following, and 35, 1, together with the *arthavargīyāṇi sūtrāṇi*, which may correspond to *Sutta Nipāta* IV *Aṭṭhakavagga*.

The last two *vaggas*, *Sutta Nipāta* IV *Aṭṭhakavagga* and V *Pārāyaṇavagga*, seem to be very old texts. Both are quoted in other parts of the canon, and both include rather early concepts of the Teaching. The fact that they are quoted in the *Divyāvadāna*, and that the *Niddesa* is a commentary on them, seems to indicate that both these *vaggas* enjoyed an existence as independent texts for quite some time. It seems to be a typical feature of Theravādin Buddhism to include finally all texts in some collection or other, not tolerating separate texts, as do other schools.⁵⁶

In the *Niddesa*, both these *vaggas* are embedded in a Commentary similar to the Pātimokkha Sutta in the *Vinaya Vibhanga*.

The *Sutta Nipāta* as a whole contains rather variegated texts collected perhaps for purposes similar to the *Khuddaka Pāṭha*. Another feature shared with the *Khuddaka Pāṭha* are the texts gleaned from other parts of the canon. Therefore, the *Sutta Nipāta* may be considered, if one wants to speculate, some kind of early ritual handbook that has some parts in common with the *Khuddaka Pāṭha*.

6. *Vimāna Vatthu* (Stories of Celestial Mansions): This text contains eighty-five poems grouped in seven *vaggas* on merit and rebirth in the celestial realms.

The *Vimāna Vatthu* and *Peta Vatthu* belong together, as witnessed by their form, contents, and mediocre literary quality. The *Vimāna Vatthu* is the longer of

⁵⁶ Texts outside the canon are considered apocryphal.

the two, with seven *vaggas*, 85 *vatthus*, and 1,282 verses, while the *Peta Vatthu* has four *vaggas* with 51 *vatthus* and only 814 verses.

Both texts, though, are of some importance for popular religion, for they deal with stories of people who have died and either enjoy their good deeds in *vimānas* (“celestial mansions”) or suffer for their bad deeds as *petas* (“hungry ghosts”). Particularly, if relatives still living do not help by offering food etc., the hungry ghosts are subject to hunger and other deprivations. Thus, these texts, which possess a Commentary giving the frame story for the verses, are clearly aimed at lay people.

The age of the different parts of the *Vimāna Vatthu* and *Peta Vatthu* does not seem to be uniform. Some *vatthus* are considered later additions, even within the Theravādin tradition, being only included in the canon during the Second Council.

7. *Peta Vatthu* (Stories of *Petas*): The *Peta Vatthu* contains fifty-one poems grouped in four *vaggas* on rebirth as “hungry ghosts” (*peta*⁵⁷) through demeritorious actions.
8. *Theragāthā* (Psalms of the Brothers): This could also be translated as “Verses of the Elders (*thera*).” The *Theragāthā* contains 107 poems (1,279 *gāthās*).

The *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* contain verses spoken by monks and nuns, respectively. Therefore, they cannot be considered *Buddhavacana*, “the word of the Buddha.”

Both texts form a unit and have a common Commentary. The longer one is the *Theragāthā*, comprising 1,279 (or, according to the tradition, 1,360) verses. Counting the numbers given in the *uddānas* “summaries” at the end of the *nipātas* adds up to a third figure: 1,294 verses. The reason for this confusion seems to be, in part, a differing division of the verses, and, in part, carelessness. The number of Elders who are supposed to have spoken these verses is unanimously 264. No figures for the *Therīgāthā* are available in the Commentary. At the end of the text, 494 verses and 101 nuns are counted. Again, the *uddānas* list 116 nuns and 494 verses. The actual number of nuns who spoke the verses is only 73.

Both collections are divided into *nipātas*, arranged according to numerical principles: the first *nipāta* contains single verses, the second, groups of two, etc., up to fourteen, then follow groups of twenty to seventy, and, finally, the *Mahānipāta*, with long sequences of verses. Thus, the *Theragāthā* has 21 *nipātas* and the *Therīgāthā* 16, from one to forty verses, and a *Mahānipāta*. No systematic order can be recognized within the *nipātas*. Only occasionally is there a connection by key words, such as *sukha* “happiness, joy.”

⁵⁷ Sanskrit *preta*, literally, “departed spirit, wandering ghost, hungry ghost.” *Petas* are not disembodied spirits or ghosts. They possess deformed physical bodies of varying size and are generally invisible to the naked eye. They have no planes of their own but live in forests, dirty surroundings, etc., and are absolutely devoid of happiness. In addition to the *Peta Vatthu*, which deals exclusively with the stories of these unfortunate beings, the *Samyutta Nikāya* contains some interesting accounts of *petas*.

Although *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* are mostly parallel in structure and contents, there are minor differences too. While all verses of the *Theragāthā* are clearly ascribed to a particular monk, some of the *Therīgāthā* verses are anonymous or are only connected to, but not spoken by, a certain nun. Sometimes, the verses are not even connected to a nun at all.

A peculiarity of the *Therīgāthā* are the vocatives in the verses: The nun is either addressed by someone, or she addresses herself, which is the case cannot be decided.

Verses may be attributed to a certain person on account of a name or a key word occurring in a verse. It is not known whether this is based upon any real memory. Sometimes, the attribution is not uniform, for some verses are connected to different persons in both the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* and in the *Apadāna*.

Quite a few verses are also attributed to the same monks in other parts of the canon, and there are collections of verses that could have been included into the *Theragāthā*, such as those in the eighth chapter of the *Milindapañha*, but were not for some reason or other.

The sources from which the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* have been compiled are not known. Probably, both collections have grown over a long period, slowly absorbing verses commemorating monks or nuns living at quite different times, for, although the Commentary states that Venerable Ānanda recited these collections at the First Council, other verses are supposed to be much younger, even by the tradition, and as having been added on the occasion of the Second Council, or still later, at the time of the Third Council under Asoka. So far, the chronology of the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* has not attracted much attention.

The verses of the monks and nuns allow a unique glimpse at very early Indian poetry, otherwise completely lost. This has been rightly emphasized by S. Lienhard in a fundamental article, where he was able to demonstrate that these verses mirror the secular poetry of their times and that they are partly love lyrics adapted to religious purposes, if secular imagery is replaced by religious imagery. Poetical figures (*alamkāra*) known from much later Indian poetry are found here for the first time.

The form of these single stanzas is not only the precursor of later *muktaka*-poetry, as found in the *Māhārāṣṭrī* verses of Hāla (2nd/3rd century CE), it is also completely different from anything found in the Vedic literature. This, again, demonstrates the very abrupt break between the Vedic and Middle Indic traditions, and it gives a vague idea of the highly valuable and beautiful poetry that existed in ancient India.

A classification of poets, which is again unique, found in the Theravādin canon further underlines that, at an early date, there were even attempts to build a theory on poetics.

Another aspect particularly of the *Therīgāthā* no less valuable for cultural history is the fact that this is the first surviving poetry supposed to have been composed by women in India, sometimes in very famous poetical verses such as the

lament of Ambapālī, the courtesan turned nun, which speak about the decay of her beauty, sometimes with grim humor, on the occasion of getting rid of an unpleasant husband. The poetically excellent quality of these verses is not matched by Indian poetesses of later periods.

9. *Therīgāthā* (Psalms of the Sisters): This could also be translated as “Verses of the Elder Nuns (*therī*).” The *Therīgāthā* contains 73 poems (522 *gāthās*).
10. *Jātaka* (Birth Stories of the *Bodhisatta*): The *Jātaka* is a collection of 547 stories purporting to be accounts of the lives of the Buddha Gotama. The *Nidānakathā*, or “Story of the Lineage,” is an introductory commentary that details the life of the *Buddha* up to the opening of the Jetavana monastery at Sāvattihī and also His lives under preceding *Buddhas*.

The collection of *Jātakas* consists roughly of 2,500 verses numerically arranged in the *Eka-* to *Terasa-Nipātas* according to the number of verses in every single *Jātaka* from 1 to 13. Then follows a *Pakiṇṇaka-Nipāta* “miscellaneous verses,” twenty-to-eighty *Nipāta*, and the *Mahānipāta* with ten long *Jātakas*, among them the Vessantara *Jātaka*.

The total number of *Jātakas* was 550, but only 547 survive. The names and numbers of the three lost *Jātakas* are still known: 497, Velāma *Jātaka*; 498, Mahāgovinda *Jātaka*; and 499, Sumedhapāṇḍita *Jātaka*, though their content is lost. Reliefs extant in Myanmar (Burma) depicting a single scene of each *Jātaka* do not give a clue about the contents.

550 *Jātakas* are only known to have existed in Myanmar once, where they were probably brought from Kāñcī in South India. This may also be the reason why the *Jātaka* prose, as handed down in Myanmar, is a recension of its own, which is unique in the tradition of Pāli literature, and independent from the Śrī Lankan.

It is not unlikely, though, that exactly 550 *Jātakas* were known in Śrī Lanka as well. For this number is mentioned at *Sumangalavilāsinī* 612, 19, *Papañcasūdanī* 106, 21, and *Atthasālinī* 31, 34. During the 14th century, the Sinhalese King Parakkamabāhu IV, appointed a monk from South India as his spiritual preceptor (*rājaguru*) and heard from him 550 *Jātakas* (*Mahāvamsa* XC 82). It is perhaps not by chance that this number is here again connected with South India.

As the title indicates, these verses refer to previous lives of the *Buddha* as a *Bodhisatta*, although frequently no connection to Buddhism can be found in the verses. They are developed into a *Jātaka* only by means of an accompanying prose story. The story, however, does not enjoy canonical status, as do the verses, but is considered a Commentary. In spite of this, it is necessary also to look at the *Jātaka-atthavaṇṇanā* “Explanation of the Meaning of the *Jātakas*” to understand them.

A long introduction called *Nidānakathā* (*Jātaka* I 2, 1—94, 28) precedes the *Jātakas* proper. Here, the life of the *Buddha* is told in prose interspersed with verses drawn from the *Buddhavaṃsa*.

The *Nidānakathā* is divided into three chapters. The *Dūrenidāna* “Cause, Origin of the Remote Past” tells the story from the time of the previous Buddha Dīpaṃkāra, who declares that Sumedha will be a future *Buddha*; the *Avidūrenidāna* “Cause, Origin in the not so Remote Past” refers to the time from the birth of the *Bodhisatta* in the Tusita Heaven to the Enlightenment; and the *Santikenidāna* “Cause, Origin in the Near Past” is devoted to the time up to the *parinibbāna*. At the end, the story of the gift of the Jetavana by Anāthapiṇḍika is told; it is in the Jetavana that most *Jātakas* are supposed to have been spoken by the *Buddha*. The *Nidānakathā* is the most important Theravādin source for information on the life of the *Buddha*.

All *Jātakas* have a strict formal structure. The first quarter of the first verse serves as a headline. The beginning of the *Jātaka* is called *paccuppannavatthu* “story of the present,” which refers to some event at the time of the *Buddha*, who then demonstrates the ultimate origin of the event by means of the *atītavatthu* “story of the past.” This really is the *Jātaka* that contains the *gāthā* “verse(s),” which are accompanied by a word for word commentary called *veyyākaraṇa*. At the end, the story of the past and the one of the present are connected in the *samodhāna* “connection.”

The *Jātaka* prose has a long history. Some *Jātakas* are found already in the canon itself, however, in a different wording. More important is the different form. For, instead of *atīte* “in the past” that is necessarily put at the beginning of the Theravādin *Jātakas*, older texts, such as the stories in the *Sagāthavagga*, use *bhūta-pubbaṃ* (*Saṃyutta Nikāya* I 216, 10, etc.) “once upon a time.” In the same way, the end of the *Jātakas* found in the canon is different. Therefore, the Theravādins have modernized their *Jātaka* texts in contrast to other Buddhist schools,⁵⁸ where the old beginning and end of the *Jātakas* have been kept, and, consequently, the form of a *Jātaka* is unique for different Buddhist schools.

Because all *Jātakas* must have been accompanied by prose from the very beginning, though ancient prose texts are available only for very few *Jātakas*, it has been surmised that this prose was not necessarily transmitted in a fixed wording. It is assumed that the story as such has been attached to a verse and was told in the words of the respective narrator. This particular type of literature, with a given verse loosely surrounded by prose, is called an *ākhyāna* “narrative” and can be traced back perhaps even to the Rig-Veda.

The prose, however, is essential only for the first 500 *Jātakas*. From the *Vīsatinipāta* “division with twenty (verses)” onwards, a new type of *Jātaka* begins — these are small epics long enough to be understood without any help from a prose text. The contents of some of these longer *Jātakas* are found, at the same time, in the famous Sanskrit epics, the *Mahābhārata* or the *Rāmāyaṇa*. They are of utmost

⁵⁸ Different *Jātaka* forms for the Theravādin, Mūlasarvāstivādin, and Mahāsāṃgikalokottaravādin Schools can be distinguished.

importance beyond Theravāda for the literary history, particularly of the epics in ancient India.

Thus, the *Jātaka* collection can be divided into two parts: the first comprises *Jātakas* nos. 1—496 (or nos. 1—499, if the three lost *Jātakas* are counted) or *Ekanipāta* to *Pakiṇṇakanipāta*. A *Pakiṇṇaka* usually marks the end of a text, and, here, it contains *Jātakas* with 23, 25, or even 47 verses, thus contradicting the numerical arrangement, which continues with the *Vīsatinipāta* “division of twenty,” if this is not the original end of a collection. If this should be true, then it makes good sense that the *Niddesa* II 80, 4 gives the number of *Jātakas* as 500 and that Fāxiān⁵⁹ saw 500 representations of *Jātakas* when a procession with the tooth relic moved to the Abhayagiri vihāra in the fifth century CE. Consequently, it is not unlikely that the Theravādin *Jātakas* are a composite collection consisting of 500 sets of verses plus fifty small epics.

Whether there are traces of a split tradition mirrored in the *Jātakas* of a form different from the Theravādin standard and surviving only in the *Aṭṭhakathā* is an open question.

The narratives found in the *Jātaka* prose are mostly fables, where the *Bodhi-satta* is reborn as an animal, or fairy tales. The *Jātaka* is, indeed, one of the most important collections of such tales to have spread over large parts of Asia and Europe, far beyond Buddhism.

The longest of the epics and the most famous *Jātaka* is the Vessantara *Jātaka*, with 786 verses. It enjoys an immense popularity and is, to this day, recited in Pāli from time to time in Theravādin countries. It relates the last rebirth of the *Bodhi-satta*, in which he accomplished the perfection of giving away all his belongings (*dānaparamitā*) before he ascends to the Tusita Heaven, from which he later enters his last existence by descending to this world.

11. *Niddesa* (Expositions): The *Niddesa* is divided into two parts: (1) *Mahāniddesa*, a commentary on the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Sutta Nipāta*, and (2) *Cūḷanidessa*, a commentary on the *Pārāyanavagga* and the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta (The Rhinoceros Horn), also of the *Sutta Nipāta*. The *Niddesa* is itself commented on in the *Saddhammapajjotikā* of Upasena and is there attributed to Venerable Sāriputta.

Both *Niddesas* really form one text, which is called *Suttaniddesa* “Explanation of *Suttas*” at the end of both the *Mahāniddesa* and the *Cūḷanidessa*. The split into “great” and “small” *Niddesa* seems to be attested to first in a subcommentary on the *Vinaya* of the 12th century.

The fact that only select parts of the *Sutta Nipāta* are explained (see above) confirms their existence as originally separate texts.

⁵⁹ Wade-Giles romanization Fa-hsien, Chinese Buddhist monk whose pilgrimage to India in 402 CE initiated Sino-Indian relations and whose writings give important information about early Buddhism. After his return to China, he translated the many Sanskrit Buddhist texts he had brought back with him into Chinese. (This footnote is taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.)

This is the only Commentary besides the *Suttavibhanga* that has been incorporated into the canon. An interesting remark on the history of the *Niddesa* is found in the *Vinaya* Commentary, where it is reported that it was nearly lost — for a certain period of time, only a single monk named Mahārakkhita still knew it by heart.

The *Niddesa* uses long series of synonyms to explain words occurring in *Sutta Nipāta* verses, and often uses formulas found in the canon as material. These formulas, which originally helped monks memorize the texts, thus gain a new function as explicative formulas.

The *Niddesa* occasionally quotes directly from the canon, but only from the *Sutta Piṭaka*. It is interesting that not all quotations marked as such in the text can be verified.

The age of the *Niddesa* has been discussed at great length by Sylvain Lévi (1863—1935) in 1925, who arrived at a date in the second century CE, arguing from the geographical horizon of the text. This date has recently been disputed by Norman (in 1983), who argues in favor of a much earlier date at the time of Asoka. The question of dating needs reexamination. It is, however, certain that the *Niddesa* does not belong to the old canonical texts and that a date after Asoka does not seem unlikely.

12. *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (Book on Analytical Knowledge⁶⁰): The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* is a detailed analysis of concepts and practices already mentioned in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* and the *Dīgha*, *Saṃyutta*, and *Anguttara Nikāyas*. It is divided into three sections: (1) *Mahā Vagga*, (2) *Yuganaddha Vagga*, and (3) *Paññā Vagga*, each *vagga* containing ten topics (*kathā*).

- *Mahā Vagga* (Great Division): The *Mahā Vagga* deals with: (1) knowledge of impermanence and the suffering of compounded things; (2) the Four Noble Truths; (3) Dependent Origination; (4) the four planes of existence; (5) false views; (6) the Five Faculties; (7) the three aspects of *nibbāna*; (8) *kamma-vipāka*; and (9) the Four Paths to *nibbāna*.
- *Yuganaddha Vagga* (Coupling Division): The *Yuganaddha Vagga* deals with: (1) the Seven Factors of Enlightenment; (2) the Four Foundations of Mindfulness; (3) the Four Right Efforts; (4) the Four Powers (will, energy, thought, and investigation); (5) the Noble Eightfold Path; (6) the four fruits of a monk's life (*patticariya*) and *nibbāna*; and (7) sixty-eight potentialities.
- *Paññā Vagga* (Wisdom Division): The *Paññā Vagga* deals with: (1) eight kinds of conduct (*cariya*); (2) postures (walking, sitting, standing, and lying down); (3) sense organs; (4) mindfulness; (5) concentration (the meditative absorptions [*jhānas*]); (6) the Four Noble Truths; (7) the Four Paths to *nibbāna*; (8) the four fruits of a monk's life; and (9) the promotion of the world's welfare.

⁶⁰ This can also be translated as “Path of Discrimination.”

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* is the only *Abhidhamma* text that has found its way into the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, probably because it was composed too late (perhaps 2nd century CE) to be included in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, which was already closed, while the end of the *Khuddaka Nikāya* always remained open for additions.

As with the *Niddesa*, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* is also ascribed to Venerable Sāriputta, who talks about four *paṭisambhidās*⁶¹ in the *Catukka Nipāta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* II 160, 19—37.

As a true *Abhidhamma* text, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* begins with a *mātikā* “summary” containing seventy-three different aspects on *ñāṇa* “knowledge,” which are then explained in detail. The second chapter, on the other hand, begins with a series of questions to be answered in the following text, which, however, is not a dialogue.

Sometimes, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* quotes from and comments on texts from the *Anguttara Nikāya*, sometimes from the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, and sometimes from the *Dīgha Nikāya*.

The purpose of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* may have been the first, and not very successful, attempt to systematize the *Abhidhamma* in the form of a handbook. If so, it could be a forerunner of both the *Vimuttimagga* and the *Visuddhimagga*. In contrast to these later texts, which are well organized and composed with great care, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* seems to be rather patched together.

Both the *Niddesa* and the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* were rejected by the Mahāsaṃghītika at the Second Council according to the *Dīpavaṃsa* V 37, which clearly is an anachronism. Inasmuch as both texts give an orthodox interpretation of canonical Theravādin literature, it is easy to understand why they could not possibly have been accepted by any other school.

13. *Apadāna* (Lives of *Arahants*): The *Apadāna* contains the tales, in verse, of the former lives of 550 *Bhikkhus* and 40 *Bhikkhunīs*.

The *Apadāna*, which is not recognized as canonical by the Dīghabhāṇakas, was one of the last books added to the Pāli Canon. It seems to be younger than the *Buddhavaṃsa*, but much older than the Commentaries. The geographical horizon seems to be similar to the one of the *Niddesa*.

The exact meaning of the title, which corresponds to Sanskrit *avadāna*, and which designates a class of literature, is not known.

⁶¹ *Paṭisambhidā* may be translated as “analytical knowledge” or “discrimination.” *Paṭisambhidā* is of four kinds: analytical knowledge pertaining to: (1) analysis of meanings “in extension” (*atthapaṭisambhidā*); (2) analysis of reasons, conditions, or causal relations (*dharmapaṭisambhidā*); (3) analysis of [meanings “in intension” as given in] definitions (*niruttipaṭisambhidā*); and (4) analysis of the intellect to which things knowable by the foregoing processes are presented (*paṭibhānapaṭisambhidā*). Cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), pp. 162—163.

The text is divided into four parts:

1. *Buddha-apadāna*: A praise of the *Buddhas* and their respective fields.
2. *Paccekabuddha-apadāna*: The *Buddha* answers Venerable Ānanda's questions about those *Buddhas* who gained Enlightenment but did not teach.
3. *Thera-apadāna*: Fifty-five *vaggas* of ten *Apadānas*, each spoken by monks.
4. *Therī-apadāna*: Four *vaggas* of ten *Apadānas*, each spoken by nuns.

The original number of *Thera Apadānas* was 550, which was reduced to 547, probably after three *Jātakas* were lost. The *Apadāna* describes the former lives of *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunīs*, some of whom are known to have spoken *Theragāthās* and *Therīgāthās*. Thus, the collection is a kind of supplement to the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* and, at the same time, parallel to the *Jātakas* in describing the former lives of the *Buddha*.

Three recensions of the *Apadāna* can be traced, for Dhammapāla quotes in his commentary to the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā Apadānas* in a wording different from the existing *Apadāna*, and a third recension has been used by the commentator on the *Sutta Nipāta*.

Moreover, some passages of the *Apadāna* are near to texts from other Buddhist schools: for example, *Apadāna* no. 390, *Pubbakammapiloti*, runs partially parallel to the Mūlasarvāstivādin *Anavataptagāthā*.

14. *Buddhavaṃsa* (History of the *Buddhas*⁶²): The *Buddhavaṃsa* contains an account of how the *Buddha* formed the resolve to gain Enlightenment, and it gives the history of the twenty-four *Buddhas* who preceded Him.

As noted above, the *Buddhavaṃsa* is a description of the lives of twenty-four predecessors of the historical *Buddha* (Buddha Gotama⁶³) in verse, beginning with Dīpaṃkara, who predicted that Sumedha would be a future *Buddha*. The first chapter is an introduction, and *Buddhavaṃsa* XXVI relates the life of the Buddha Gotama. A *Pakiṇṇakakathā* “chapter with miscellaneous matters” follows, and, again, the former *Buddhas* are enumerated, with three *Buddhas* added (Taṇhaṃkara, Medhaṃkara, and Saraṇaṃkara), and Metteyya, the future *Buddha*, mentioned. According to the Commentary, the verses were added by the participants of the First Council and are not, consequently, *Buddhavacana*.

Six predecessors of the *Buddha* were already mentioned in the *Dīgha Nikāya*. The number of twenty-four predecessors given in the *Buddhavaṃsa* is probably analogous to the corresponding number of Jain Tīrthaṃkaras.⁶⁴

⁶² This may also be translated as “Lineage of the *Buddhas*.”

⁶³ Buddha Sākyamuni.

⁶⁴ Jainism recognizes twenty-four masters (*tīrthaṃkaras*) who have conveyed the principles of Jain belief over the centuries. The last such teacher was Mahāvīra (Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta), a contemporary of the *Buddha*, who founded Jainism as a religious community. Mahāvīra and his eleven disciples were the first

The contents of the *Buddhavaṃsa* partly overlap with the *Jātaka-nidāna*, where verses from the *Buddhavaṃsa* are quoted. The same is true for the introduction to the *Atthasālinī*.

A quotation from an otherwise unknown *Dvādasasahassabuddhavaṃsa* has recently been discovered.

15. *Cariyā Piṭaka* (Modes of Conduct): The *Cariyā Piṭaka* contains thirty-five *Jātaka* tales in verse, illustrating seven of the Ten Perfections⁶⁵ (*pāramī*, *pāramitā*): (1) generosity (*dāna*); (2) morality (*sīla*); (3) renunciation (*nekkhamma*); (4) wisdom (*paññā*); (5) energy (*virīya*); (6) patience (*khanti*); (7) truthfulness (*sacca*); (8) determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*); (9) loving-kindness (*mettā*); and (10) equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The *Cariyā Piṭaka* is the only title in the *Tipiṭaka* also containing the word *piṭaka* “basket [of conduct].” A second title is mentioned at the end of the *Cariyā Piṭaka*: *Buddhāpadānīyaṃ nāma dhammapariyāyaṃ*, which brings this text near to the *Apadāna*.

At the same time, the *Cariyā Piṭaka* is closely connected to the *Buddhavaṃsa*. In the introduction, Venerable Sāriputta asks the *Buddha* about His resolve to become a *Buddha* (*Buddhabhāvāya abhinīhāra*) and about the ten perfections. The first question is answered in the *Buddhavaṃsa*, as clearly seen in the Commentary, and the second in the *Cariyā Piṭaka*, although only six perfections are actually treated in the *Cariyā Piṭaka*. This is supplemented by a long appendix to the Commentary, where all ten perfections are explained.

The *Cariyā Piṭaka* is divided into three sections and contains thirty-five stories from the former lives of the *Buddha* as a *Bodhisatta*. Consequently, the *Cariyā Piṭaka* is near to the *Jātakas*, where thirty-two of the thirty-five stories can be traced. In the *Cariyā Piṭaka*, however, the verses have been provided with a strong Buddhist touch often missing in the *Jātaka* verses. Therefore, the author of the prose *Jātakas* often quotes from the *Cariyā Piṭaka*.

The *Jātaka-nidāna* also quotes a *Cariyā Piṭaka* containing thirty-five stories, which are not always identical with those actually found in the *Cariyā Piṭaka*. Further, in this second recension of the *Cariyā Piṭaka*, all ten perfections are discussed. It seems to be nearer to the canonical Mahāvihāra *Jātaka*: *Cariyā Piṭaka* II 6 = *Cariyā Piṭaka* 288—306 is called *Temiyapaṇḍita*, a name used for the corresponding *Jātaka* no. 538 in the Burmese *Jātaka* tradition, most likely rooted in South India, while it is called *Mūgapakkha* in the second recension of the *Cariyā Piṭaka* (*Jātaka* I 46, 25), as in the Śri Lankan *Jātaka*.

to turn against the Brahmins. Their teaching is called India’s “unorthodox religion,” inasmuch as it rejects the brahmanic sacrificial rites as well as the authority of the Vedas. Jainism requires that one practice austerities for at least twelve years. Cf. *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion* (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications), pp. 374—375.

⁶⁵ Ten qualities leading to Buddhahood.

Thus, Dhammapāla comments on a *Cariyā Piṭaka* perhaps connected to South India. At the same time, he uses a different *Apadāna* recension, which may be South Indian as well. Therefore, it is possible that a South Indian *Cariyā Piṭaka*, originally called *Buddhāpadānīya Dhammapariyāya* gained canonical status also in the Mahāvihāra, because it was commented on by Paramatthadīpanī, whereas the Śri Lankan *Cariyā Piṭaka* survives only in the *Jātaka-nidāna*. Dhammapāla's *Apadāna* recension, on the other hand, on which there is no old Commentary at all, was not accepted by the Mahāvihāra. ■

3

The Abhidhamma Piṭaka

Introduction

Overview

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is the most important and most interesting of the three *Piṭakas*, containing, as it does, the profound philosophy of the *Buddha's* teaching, in contrast to the simpler discourses of the *Sutta Piṭaka*. *Abhidhamma*, the Higher Doctrine of the *Buddha*, expounds the quintessence of His profound Teachings.

According to some scholars, *Abhidhamma* was not taught by the *Buddha* but is a later elaboration by scholastic monks. Tradition, however, attributes the nucleus of the *Abhidhamma* to the *Buddha* Himself. The *mātikā*,⁶⁶ or “matrices,” of the *Abhidhamma*, such as *kusalā dhammā* (Wholesome States), *akusalā dhammā* (Unwholesome States), *avyākatā dhammā* (Neutral States), etc., which have been elaborated in six of the books of the *Abhidhamma* (*Kathāvatthu*⁶⁷ being excluded), were expounded by the *Buddha*. Venerable Sāriputta is given the credit for having expounded all of these topics in detail.

Whoever the great author or authors may have been, it has to be admitted that the *Abhidhamma* must be the product of an intellectual genius comparable only to the *Buddha*. This is evident from the intricate and subtle *Paṭṭhāna Pakaraṇa*, which describes the various causal relations in detail.

To wise truth-seekers, the *Abhidhamma* is an indispensable guide and an intellectual treat. Here is found food for thought to original thinkers and to earnest students who wish to develop wisdom and lead an ideal Buddhist life. *Abhidhamma* is not a subject of fleeting interest designed for the superficial reader.

Modern Western psychology, limited as it is, comes within the scope of *Abhidhamma*, inasmuch as it deals with mind, thoughts, thought processes, and mental properties; but the *Abhidhamma* does not admit the existence of a psyche or soul. It teaches a psychology without a psyche.

⁶⁶ The *mātikā* (matrices) are referred to in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (*Dīgha Nikāya* no. 16).

⁶⁷ The authorship of the *Kathāvatthu* (Points of Controversy) is attributed to Venerable Moggalliputta Tissa, who presided over the Third Council at the time of King Asoka.

If one were to read the *Abhidhamma* as a modern textbook on psychology, one would be disappointed. No attempt has been made to solve all of the problems that confront a modern psychologist.

Consciousness (*citta*) is defined. Thoughts are analyzed and classified chiefly from an ethical standpoint. Fifty-two mental factors (*cetasika*) are enumerated. The composition of each type of consciousness is set forth in detail. How thoughts arise is minutely described. *Bhavanga*⁶⁸ and *javana*⁶⁹ thought-moments, which are explained only in the *Abhidhamma* and which have no parallel in modern psychology, are of special interest to those concerned with the study of the mind. Irrelevant problems, which may be of interest to students and scholars, but which have no relation to one's Deliverance, are deliberately set aside.

Matter (*rūpa*) is summarily discussed, but it has not been described for physicists. The fundamental units of matter, their material properties, the source of matter, and the relationship of mind and matter are all explained. However, *Abhidhamma* does not attempt to give a systematized knowledge of mind and matter. It investigates these two composite factors of the so-called "being" to help with the understanding of things as they truly are. A philosophy has been developed on those lines. Based on that philosophy, an ethical system has been evolved to realize the ultimate Goal — *nibbāna*.

While the *Sutta Piṭaka* contains the conventional teaching (*vohāra desanā*), the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* contains the ultimate teaching (*paramattha desanā*).

It is generally admitted by most exponents of the *Dhamma* that a knowledge of the *Abhidhamma* is essential to comprehend fully the Teachings of the *Buddha*, inasmuch as it presents the key that opens the door to reality.

Textual Analysis⁷⁰

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is considerably younger than both the *Vinaya Piṭaka* and the *Sutta Piṭaka* and most likely originated between 200 BCE and 200 CE. It is not mentioned in the account of the First Council. Three parts of the canon are referred to for the first time in a late part of the *Sutta Vibhanga* in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* (*Vinaya* IV 344,

⁶⁸ *Bhavanga* is explained in the *Abhidhamma* Commentaries as the foundation or condition of existence. There are two types of *bhavanga*, namely, *bhavanga-sota* and *bhavanga-citta*. *Bhavanga-sota* may tentatively be rendered as the "undercurrent forming the condition of being or existence." *Bhavanga-citta*, on the other hand, may be rendered as "subconsciousness," though it differs in several respects from the usage of that term in Western psychology. For more information, cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), pp. 38—39.

⁶⁹ *Javana*, literally, "impulsion," is the phase of full cognition in the cognitive series, or perceptual process, occurring at its climax, if the respective object is large or distinct. It is at this phase that *kamma* is produced, that is, wholesome or unwholesome volitional activities of mind, speech, or body concerning the perception that was the object of the previous stages of the respective process of consciousness. Cf. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (4th revised edition; Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society [1980]), pp. 82—83.

⁷⁰ Adapted from Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 64—65.

17). The word *abhidhamma* occurs in earlier parts of the canon, but without any technical connotation, simply meaning “things related to the teaching.” The Commentary explains *Abhidhamma* as “higher *Dhamma*.”

The Theravādin *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is composed of the following seven works:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Dhammasaṅgaṇī</i> | (Classification of <i>Dhammas</i>) |
| 2. <i>Vibhaṅga</i> | (Divisions) |
| 3. <i>Dhātukathā</i> | (Discourse on Elements) |
| 4. <i>Puggalapaññatti</i> | (The Book on Individuals) |
| 5. <i>Kathāvatthu</i> | (Points of Controversy) |
| 6. <i>Yamaka</i> | (The Book of Pairs) |
| 7. <i>Paṭṭhāna</i> | (The Book of Causal Relations) |

This division is described for the first time in the introduction to the *Milindapañha*⁷¹ (*Milindapañha* 12, 21—31) and discussed at length in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* Commentary (*Atthasālinī* 3, 21—10, 30). Here, an eighth text, which did not survive, is mentioned. For the Commentary says that the Viṇḍavādins rejected the *Kathāvatthu* as not spoken by the *Buddha* and replaced it by the *Mahādhammahadaya*, which could correspond in some way or other to the *Dhammahadayavibhaṅga*.

The Teaching of the *Buddha* as preserved in the *Sutta Piṭaka* is not arranged systematically, in spite of some early attempts, such as the last two *suttas* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, particularly *sutta* no. 34, *Dasuttara Sutta*, containing lists on different concepts of the *Dhamma*. Therefore, the Commentary calls this text a *mātikā* (*Sumangalavilāsinī* 1054, 29), with much justification. The term *mātikā* refers to lists or summaries typical for *Abhidhamma* texts, which usually begin with a *mātikā* naming items to be explained in the following text. The idea of creating *mātikās* seems to have been borrowed from the *Vinaya*, because *mātikās* are found already in the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, and because this word refers to the *Pātimokkhasutta* in the frequent formula *dhammadhara*, *vinayadhara*, *mātikādhara*. These *mātikās* came into existence once the editors tried to go beyond the simple collection of discourses of the *Buddha* and began to arrange the main points of His Teaching in a systematic form, which, at the same time, could be easily memorized.

The lists thus created needed explanations, just as the late Vedic *sūtra* texts are hardly understandable without a commentary. Thus, the *mātikās* may be the Buddhist answer to the Vedic *sūtras*.

The language of the *Abhidhamma* texts is clearly distinct from the usage found in the first two *Piṭakas*. Brief questions are answered by lists of concepts, very often in formulas. Thus, the *Abhidhamma* texts use a method of explanation also found in the *Niddesa*, with its explicative formulas. The linguistic relation between these two types of texts, and, again, their relation to the old oral formulas in the *Sutta Piṭaka*, would make an interesting study, which might tell much about relative chronology.

⁷¹ The *Milindapañha* has been translated by I. B. Horner: *Milinda's Questions* (Oxford: Pāli Text Society [two volumes, 1990]).

Dhammasaṅgaṇī

Overview

In the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *dhammas*, or “factors of existence,” are enumerated. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* opens with a *mātikā*, a “matrix” or “summary,” that is, a schedule of categories, which classifies the totality of phenomena into a scheme of twenty-two triads (*tika*) — sets of three terms — and a hundred dyads (*duka*) — sets of two terms. The *mātikā* also includes a *suttanta* matrix, a schedule of forty-two dyads taken from the *suttas*. The *mātikā* serves as a framework for the entire *Abhidhamma*, introducing the diverse perspectives from which all phenomena are to be classified. The main body of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* consists of four parts:

1. “States of Consciousness,” which analyzes all states of consciousness into their constituent factors, each of which is elaborately defined;
2. “Matter,” which enumerates and classifies the various types of material phenomena;
3. “The Summary,” offering concise explanations of all the terms in the *Abhidhamma* and *suttanta* matrixes;
4. “The Synopsis,” offering more condensed explanations of the *Abhidhamma* matrix but not the *suttanta* matrix.

Textual Analysis

Besides the name *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* “Classification of *Dhammas*,” old texts also use the alternative title *Dhammasaṅgaha* “Compendium of *Dhammas*.” Further, the title *Abhidhammasaṅgaṇī* is found in old manuscripts, but this is considered to be a mistake.

The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* begins with a *mātikā* and without an introduction, a fact that seems to have concerned the Theravādins in olden times, for the Commentary reports that there were attempts to create a *nidāna* for the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. This was either taken from an existing *sutta* or created specifically for this very text: “at one time, the *Buddha* stayed in the Tāvattīmsa Heaven ... and taught the *Abhidhamma*” (*Atthasālinī* 30, 16—31, 16).

This introduction refers to the tradition that the *Buddha* first taught the *Abhidhamma* to His deceased mother, along with other deities, in the Tāvattīmsa Heaven during the fourth week after His Enlightenment (*Atthasālinī* 13, 12). The motive behind this idea is easy to see. If the late *Abhidhamma* was considered as *Buddhavacana*, it was imperative to find some place where it could have been spoken, as is usual in the *suttas* and *Vinaya* texts alike. Of course, there was and could not possibly be any tradition on place names, and, consequently, the displacement into the Tāvattīmsa Heaven was a wise move, with no local Buddhist community being able to object, because it was not mentioned in the *nidāna*.

The tradition of how it was transmitted on earth begins with Venerable Sāriputta and includes Venerable Mahinda, who brought the *Abhidhamma* to Śrī Lanka, according

to the Commentary (*Atthasālinī* 32, 13—20). The series of names given there seems to be inspired by the *Parivāra* (*Vinaya* V 3, 1).

The subdivisions of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* are discussed in the Commentary, where the titles are slightly different from those used in the text itself. Moreover, it is stated that the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* can be expanded endlessly (*Atthasālinī* 7, 6). Thus, the text is seen as an open system, somewhat similar to the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*.

The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is a compilation from different sources and is considered to be the youngest text among those found in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. Consequently, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* reflects the state of development of Theravādin philosophy at the time when the third *Piṭaka* was closed.

Vibhanga

Overview

The *Vibhanga* contains eighteen chapters, dealing, in turn, with the following: sense bases, elements, truths, faculties, Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), foundations of mindfulness, supreme efforts, means to accomplishment, factors of enlightenment, the Noble Eightfold Path, *jhānas*, illimitables (*brahmavihāra*), training rules, analytical knowledge, kinds of knowledge, defilements, and “the heart of the doctrine,” a concise overview of the Buddhist universe.

Textual Analysis

The term *vibhanga* “explanation, commentary” is already mentioned in older parts of the canon. In contrast to the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *Vibhanga* does not begin with a *mātikā*, which, however, can be reconstructed by comparing parallel texts with other schools.

As noted above, the *Vibhanga* contains eighteen chapters. A first *mātikā* is treated in Chapters 1—6, a second one in Chapters 7—15. These *mātikās* consist of very old lists, such as the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*), the twelve sense bases (*āyatana*), etc., which are frequently discussed in the *Sutta Piṭaka*. Thus, the *Vibhanga* systematizes old material, and this text is considered to be the oldest in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*.

The last three chapters of the *Vibhanga* were originally independent small books on *Abhidhamma* separate from the beginning of the text. Chapter 16, *Ñāṇavibhanga*, is arranged according to the same numerical principle as the *Anguttara Nikāya*.

The last chapter of the *Vibhanga* is the *Dhammahadayaavibhanga*, with a *mātikā* of its own. Perhaps this treatise is identical with or similar to the *Mahādhammahadaya* accepted by the Vīṇḍavādins as canonical in place of the *Kathāvatthu*.

Dhātukathā

Overview

The *Dhātukathā* discusses all phenomena with reference to the three schemata of aggregates, sense bases, and elements. It attempts to determine whether, and to what extent, they are included or not included in them and whether they are associated with them or disassociated with them.

Textual Analysis

The *Dhātukathā* begins with a *mātikā* split into two parts. The fourteen items mentioned in the first part provide, at the same time, the division of the text, and those contained in the second part are combined with them. The central theme of the *Dhātukathā* is the relation of different concepts to the *dhātus* “elements.”

It is stated in the *Sāratthappakāsinī*⁷² (*Sāratthappakāsinī* II 201, 25) that the *Dhātukathā* and some other parts of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* were not recited during the first three councils.

Puggalapaññatti

Overview

The body of the *Puggalapaññatti* provides formal definitions of different types of individuals. It has ten chapters: the first deals with single types of individuals, the second with pairs, the third with groups of three, etc. The detailed typology elaborated in the *Puggalapaññatti* is heavily dependent upon the *Sutta Piṭaka*, especially the *Anguttara Nikāya*.

Textual Analysis

The *mātikā* of the *Puggalapaññatti* comprises six *paññattis* “concepts,” of which the first five have been taken over from the common *Abhidhamma mātikā*, and only the last one is *puggala* “individual, person,” which is actually explained in the text. The different types of persons are arranged in groups from one to ten, and, as in the *Anguttara Nikāya*, the numbers of the last three groups are arrived at only by adding two sets of persons.

Except for the *mātikā*, this text is particularly near to *Dīgha Nikāya*, *sutta* no. 34, *Dasuttara Sutta*, and to the *Anguttara Nikāya*, and, indeed, texts from the *Anguttara Nikāya* have been included in the *Puggalapaññatti*, though not mechanically, for the

⁷² The *Sāratthappakāsinī* is the Commentary on the *Samyutta Nikāya*.

address *bhikkhave* “monks” has been regularly removed from the text. Thus, the “remembered orally” prevalent in the *suttas* and even in the *Vinaya* texts has been given up in favor of the style appropriate for a treatise on philosophy.

The editor of the *Puggalapaññatti* limited his efforts to a collection of material from other parts of the canon, without developing any ideas of his own on the concept of a person. Therefore, it is impossible to relate the *Puggalapaññatti* to the history of philosophical ideas and to other *Abhidhamma* texts in order to arrive at a relative date. Moreover, there is no parallel text in any other Buddhist school — the *Prajñaptiśāstra* of the Sarvāstivādins is completely different. Consequently, the *Puggalapaññatti* seems to be a specific Theravādin creation not belonging to the common stock of *Abhidhamma* texts.

Kathāvatthu

Overview

The *Kathāvatthu* contains a discussion of the points of controversy between the early Buddhist Schools and a defense of the Theravādin viewpoint. The *Kathāvatthu* is attributed to Venerable Moggalliputta Tissa, who presided over the Third Council, which was convened in Patna by the Emperor Asoka in the middle of the third century BCE.

Textual Analysis

The *Kathāvatthu*, “Points of Controversy” or “Text Dealing with Disputes,” is quite different from the other six treatises of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. For it does not list *dhammas*, but aims at the refutation of heretical views.

According to tradition, the *Kathāvatthu* was composed by Venerable Moggalliputta Tissa 218 years after the *parinibbāna* of the *Buddha*. Consequently, this is the only canonical *Abhidhamma* text exactly dated to the year in the Theravādin tradition itself.

As previously mentioned, the *Kathāvatthu* was not universally accepted as a canonical text, because it clearly is not *buddhavacana*. However, it is saved as such by the view that the *Buddha* has spoken the *mātikā* in the Tāvattīmsa Heaven, which Moggalliputta Tissa elaborated on at the Third Council after King Asoka had purged the *Sangha*. When the canon was recited on this occasion, the *Kathāvatthu* was included. Obviously, the Theravādin tradition was always aware of the relatively late date of the *Kathāvatthu*.

The *Kathāvatthu* is divided into four *Paṇṇāsaka* “groups of fifty (points to be discussed),” which, in turn, are subdivided into twenty *vaggas*, each with a varying number of disputed items. At the end, three further *vaggas* are added. This somewhat irregular structure seems to indicate that the text has been growing over a certain period of time, and, whenever new controversies arose, they were included.

In contrast to other *Abhidhamma* texts, the *Kathāvatthu* does not begin with a *mātikā*. Inasmuch as it was felt that an *Abhidhamma* text simply needs a *mātikā*, it has been inserted into an existing text (*Kathāvatthu* 11, 6—13, 24), which is centered around problems connected to *puggala* “person.” This is by far the longest discussion in the *Kathāvatthu*, and probably an old part, for there is also a chapter on *pudgala*⁷³ in the parallel text used by the Sarvāstivādins, the *Vijñānakāya*.

It has been observed that there are linguistically divergent forms,⁷⁴ so-called “Māgadhisms,” in the *Puggala* chapter of the *Kathāvatthu*. These Māgadhisms are limited to certain formulas used in the discussion. This, again, shows that the beginning of the *Kathāvatthu* has been built from old material. It does not mean, however, that the *Kathāvatthu* was originally formulated in eastern India or in the early eastern language of Buddhism, because fragments from an early oral method of discussion may survive here. This is all the more interesting, since the text of the *Kathāvatthu* is not always really understandable without further explanation. Obviously, a possibly originally oral commentary had to accompany the text. Thus, this type of text tradition is, in a way, surprisingly near to that of the *Jātakas*.

A little more than two hundred points are discussed in the *Kathāvatthu*, although it seems that the tradition assumes a larger number. According to the Commentaries, Moggalliputta Tissa used five hundred orthodox, and the same number of heretical, *suttas* to demonstrate his purpose.

There are, indeed, quotations from the *Sutta Piṭaka*, which are always accepted as authoritative even by the opponents of the Theravādin point of view. It is interesting that sometimes the wording seems to be slightly different from the received text. Among these quotations is a verse from the *Nidhikaṇḍa*, the only reference to a text from the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, which, however, seems originally to have existed as a separate text. Thus, this quotation has no bearing on the existence of this *Nikāya*.

It is clear that the *Kathāvatthu* is a source of the highest possible value for the history of Buddhist philosophy, and this fact has gotten due attention in research.

The discussions in the *Kathāvatthu* are developed in a very peculiar, prelogical way of arguing, perhaps originally developed in eastern India. At the same time, some features of the much later Indian logic seem to be anticipated here in an early form. Therefore, the *Kathāvatthu* deserves much more attention than has been devoted to it so far in the history of Indian logic, in spite of some valuable studies.

⁷³ This is the Sanskrit equivalent of Pāli *puggala* “individual, person.”

⁷⁴ That is, forms in a Middle Indo-Aryan language other than Pāli — in this case, from the Middle Indo-Aryan language of the Kingdom of Māgadhā. In its main features, Pāli is clearly a (north-)western Middle Indo-Aryan language, and, as such, it could not have been the language actually spoken by the *Buddha*, which was probably Māgadhī, an eastern Middle Indo-Aryan language. In the earliest times, the Buddhist teachings were preached in the vernaculars of the major centers such as Ujjayinī, Mathurā, Vaiśālī, and Kauśambī (using their Sanskrit designations). Traces of elements from Middle Indo-Aryan languages other than Pāli can be found here and there in the texts of the Theravādin Canon. Cf. T. Y. Elizarenkova and V. N. Toporov, *The Pāli Language* (Moscow: “Nauka” Publishing House [1976]), pp. 14—22, and Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin and New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter [2000]), pp. 4—5.

A strong disadvantage of the presentation of the controversies in the *Kathāvatthu* is the lack of indication of the respective school to which the heretical views under discussion may belong. These are mentioned much later only in the Commentary.⁷⁵ In this respect, the *Kathāvatthu* differs from the *Vijñānakāya*, where the interlocutors are named.

It is not entirely obvious why the *Kathāvatthu* has been included in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. The form of the text, which contains discussions, is nearer to the *suttas* than to the *Abhidhamma*. On the other hand, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, which is much more an *Abhidhamma* text than is the *Kathāvatthu*, was included only in the *Khuddaka Nikāya* and not in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, where it really belongs. The reason may be chronology. At the time when the *Kathāvatthu* was formed under King Asoka, the four great *Nikāyas* may have already been closed collections, while the *Abhidhamma* was still open. That had changed when the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* came into existence. If the second century CE is approximately correct, then, evidently, the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* was closed as well, and only the *Khuddaka Nikāya* remained open for new texts such as the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and others.

Yamaka

Overview

The *Yamaka* has the purpose of resolving ambiguities and defining the precise usage of technical terms. It is called the “Book of Pairs” because it employs pairs of questions that approach the subject under investigation from opposing points of view. The *Yamaka* has ten chapters: (1) roots; (2) aggregates; (3) sense bases; (4) elements; (5) truths; (6) formations; (7) latent dispositions; (8) consciousness; (9) phenomena; and (10) faculties.

Textual Analysis

The *Yamaka* is a large text of perhaps more than 2,500 pages, if printed in full. All editions are strongly abbreviated. Following the tradition, the *Yamaka* contains the enormous number of two thousand *bhāṇavāras*.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ The Commentary for the *Kathāvatthu* is called the *Pañcappakaraṇaṭṭhakathā*. This Commentary also covers the *Dhātukathā*, the *Puggalapaññatti*, the *Yamaka*, and the *Paṭṭhāna*. Among the commentaries united in the *Pañcappakaraṇaṭṭhakathā*, the one for the *Kathāvatthu*, deserves special attention for the history of Buddhism. It begins with a survey of the different Buddhist schools, which contains a quotation from the *Dīpavaṃsa*. The heretical views discussed and refuted in the *Kathāvatthu* are attributed to these different schools.

⁷⁶ Sections of the scriptures, divided into such for purposes for recitation.

It seems that the original idea behind the title was that pairs are constituted by the arising of one thing, which conditions the arising of a second thing. The tradition derives the title from different sets of pairs.

According to the Commentary, there are three sets of pairs: (1) *Atthayamaka*, (2) *Dhammayamaka*, and (3) *Pucchāyamaka*, besides an additional second division into ten pairs, also named in the Commentary. These items, which actually follow the *Vibhanga-mātikā*, are recognized as a *mātikā* in the much later *Mohavicchedanī*.

The subdivision of the *Yamaka* is still more complicated, and it is important for the history of the text that the seventh of the ten *yamakas* does not occur in the *Vibhanga-mātikā*, which has already been observed by the Commentary. This chapter may be a later addition.

Paṭṭhāna

Overview

Causation and the mutual relationship of phenomena are examined in the *Paṭṭhāna*. The *Paṭṭhāna* contains an elaboration of a scheme of twenty-four conditional relations (*paccaya*) for plotting the causal connections between different types of phenomena. The body of this work applies these conditional relations to all the phenomena included in the *Abhidhamma* matrix. The book has four main sections: (1) origination according to the positive method; (2) origination according to the negative method; (3) origination according to the positive-negative method; and (4) origination according to the negative-positive method. Each of these, in turn, has six subdivisions: origination (1) of triads (“groups of three”), (2) of dyads (“groups of two”), (3) of dyads and triads combined, (4) of triads and dyads combined, (5) of triads and triads combined, and (6) of dyads and dyads combined.

Textual Analysis

Because of its great size⁷⁷ as well as its philosophical importance, the *Paṭṭhāna* is also known as *Mahāpakaraṇa*, “The Great Treatise.” This huge text is by far the longest single text found in the *Tipiṭaka*. The number of *bhāṇavāras* is incalculable, inasmuch as it is not given.

The title is explained as “basis (for all other *Abhidhamma* texts),” for the twenty-four triads (*tika*) and the one hundred dyads (*duka*) are considered to be the *mātikā* for all *Abhidhamma* texts. This, of course, does not agree with the historical development.

Traditionally, it is assumed that the triads and dyads just mentioned were spoken by the *Buddha* Himself, while another forty-two dyads have been added by Venerable

⁷⁷ In the Burmese script Sixth Council edition of the Pāli Canon, the *Paṭṭhāna* spans five volumes totaling 2,500 pages.

Sāriputta. It has been recognized by the tradition that the basis of the *Paṭṭhāna* are *Dīgha Nikāya* no. 33, *Sangīti Sutta*, and no. 34, *Dasuttara Sutta*, together with the *Anguttara Nikāya*. The text is thought to facilitate the use of the *suttas* for *Abhidhamma* specialists, and this is the purpose usually ascribed to the *Paṭṭhāna* by tradition.

The *Paṭṭhāna* tries to provide a comprehensive explanation of causality and enumerates what can originate out of what. It is easy to see that the number of possibilities that is opened up here is almost limitless.

The structure of the *Paṭṭhāna* is difficult to follow and has not been sufficiently investigated so far. ■

4

The Three Councils⁷⁸

The First Council

The *Buddha* passed away in His eightieth year on the full moon day of Vesak. His death was an irreparable loss. All His followers, with the exception of *Anāgāmi*s and *Arahants*, were plunged into deep grief and were weeping and lamenting. However, a certain *Bhikkhu* named Subhadda, who had entered the Order in his old age, was the only one who rejoiced over the death of the *Buddha*.

“Do not grieve, brothers,” he said, “do not weep. We are now delivered of that Great Ascetic. He constantly admonished us, saying: ‘This is proper, this is not proper.’ Now we are free to do as we like.”

These unexpected words that fell from the lips of a disciple, when hardly a week had passed since the death of the Blessed One, induced Venerable Kassapa, the third Chief Disciple of the *Buddha*, to hold a council of leading *Arahants* in order to protect and strengthen the *sāsana*. The other *Theras* were consulted, and they all welcomed the suggestion.

King Ajātasatu was informed of the intention of the *Sangha*, and he made all the necessary arrangements for the *Sangha* to convene at the entrance to the Sattapanni Cave in Rājagaha.

500 seats were prepared in the spacious hall, but only 499 distinguished *Arahants* were invited to attend the convocation. The remaining seat was intended for Venerable Ānanda, who was then a *Sotāpanna*. But in due course, as anticipated, he attained Arahantship and appeared on the scene to occupy the seat that had been reserved for him.

Venerable Kassapa was the presiding *Thera*. Venerable Upāli was chosen to recite the *Vinaya*, and Venerable Ānanda the *Dhamma*.

The First Council was held three months after the *parinibbāna* of the *Buddha*, in the eighth year of King Ajātasattu’s reign. It lasted seven months.

The *Vinaya*, being the cornerstone of the *sāsana*, was recited first. It is composed of five books. Next, the *Dhamma* was recited. It is composed of five collections, or *Nikāyas*. It should be noted that the opening words of every *sutta*, “*Evam me sutam*,” “Thus have I heard,” were uttered by Venerable Ānanda Thera.

⁷⁸ This chapter is adapted from Nārada Thera, *A Manual of Buddhism* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: The Buddhist Missionary Society [fifth edition, 1971]), Chapter XVII: The Three Councils, pp. 113—118.

According to tradition, the *Abhidhamma* was recited by all of the *Arahants* who were present at the convocation. In point of fact, however, the *Abhidhamma* was most likely compiled between 200 BCE and 200 CE. Originally, the *Abhidhamma* consisted of six books. The *Kathāvatthu*, which was compiled by Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa, was added at the Third Council.

All of these works are collectively termed the *Tipiṭaka*, the “Three Baskets.” The first collection, the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, the “Basket of Discipline,” mainly deals with rules and regulations that the *Buddha* promulgated for the discipline of the Order (*Sangha*) of Monks (*Bhikkhus*) and Nuns (*Bhikkhunīs*). The second collection, the *Sutta Piṭaka*, the “Basket of Discourses,” consists chiefly of discourses delivered by the *Buddha* on various occasions. Some discourses delivered by Venerables Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Ānanda, etc. are also included in this collection. The third collection, the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the “Basket of Higher Doctrine,” contains the profound philosophy of the *Buddha*’s Teaching.

The *Tipiṭika* was committed to writing at Aluvihāra in Śri Lanka about 83 BCE in the reign of King Vaṭṭa Gāmaṇi Abhaya.

The Second Council

The Second Council was held at Vesālī in the tenth year of King Kālāsoka’s reign, 100 years after the *parinibbāna* of the *Buddha*. At that time, many misguided *Bhikkhus* of the Vajji clan claimed that the following ten points were not unlawful:⁷⁹

1. *Singilonakappa*: it is permissible to use salt in horns, etc. in order to season unsalted foods.
2. *Dvangulakappa*: it is permissible to eat food as long as the sun’s shadow has not passed the meridian by more than two finger’s breadth.
3. *Gāmantarakappa*: it is permissible for a *Bhikkhu* who has already finished his meal to eat another meal without going through the due *Vinaya* rite if he intends to enter a village.
4. *Āvasakappa*: it is permissible to perform the *Uposatha* ceremony in separate buildings in the case of a large *sīma* (jurisdiction).
5. *Anumatikappa*: it is permissible to perform any *Vinaya* ceremony first and then take the consent of the absent *Bhikkhus*.
6. *Āccinakappa*: it is permissible to conform to the practice of teachers and preceptors.
7. *Amathitakappa*: it is permissible for a *Bhikkhu* who has finished his meal to drink that milk which has changed its original state but has not yet become curd, without getting the due *Vinaya* rite done.
8. *Jalogikappa*: it is permissible to drink unfermented palm-wine.
9. *Adasaka-nisidanakappa*: it is permissible to use mats without fringes.

⁷⁹ All of these points pertain to the disciplinary rules. Some of them may not be intelligible to lay readers.

10. *Jātarupadikappa*: it is permissible to accept gold and silver.

Venerable Yasa, who came to hear of these heretical teachings, resolved, even at the cost of his life, to nip them in the bud. He succeeded. Venerable Revata, who was questioned about them, proclaimed that they were all unlawful.

Ultimately, in the presence of eight distinguished *Arahants* who had assembled at Vālūkārāma in Vesālī, Venerable Sabbakāmi, being 120 years from his higher ordination (*upasampadā*), when questioned by Venerable Revata, judged that they were all unlawful according to the *Vinaya*.

After this, Venerable Revata chose 700 distinguished *Arahants* to attend a council in order to protect the *Dhamma* from degeneration and corruption. This Second Council lasted eight months. King Kālāsoka acted as the royal patron. Venerable Sabbakāmi was the presiding *Thera*.

Among the assembled *Arahants*, Venerables Sabbakāmi, Salha, Revata, Yasa, Sambhūta, Khujjasobhita, and Sānavāsika, all pupils of Venerable Ānanda, and Venerables Vasabhaḡāmika and Sumana, pupils of Venerable Anuruddha, had the good fortune to have lived in the *Buddha's* own time.

The Third Council

The conversion of King Asoka (Dharmāsoka) was a very great asset to Buddhism. With his royal patronage, Buddhism flourished, and the *sāsana* gradually grew in both importance and numbers. Tempted by worldly gain, many undesirables of alien sects joined the Order and polluted the *sāsana* by their corrupt lifestyles and heretical views.

Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa, who was then the senior *Arahant*, being aware of the corruption of the Order, refrained from performing the *Uposatha* Ceremony with the *Sangha* for seven years, and was living in retirement on the banks of the Ahoganga River.

It was at this time that King Asoka had questions about a thoughtless act done by an irresponsible minister. He was told that Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa would be able to answer his questions. The King sent word to the *Arahant*, but he would not come. Failing twice, the third time, the King sent a messenger inviting Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa to protect the *sāsana*. This time, the Venerable *Thera* accepted the invitation and arrived at the capital, Pāṭaliputta (modern Patna). The King received him with due honor and housed him in Asokārāma, built by the King himself. For seven days, the King stayed with him and studied the *Dhamma*, sitting at his feet.

The *Bhikkhus* were then tested with regard to their views, and those who held heretical views were expelled from the Order. The pure *Bhikkhus* who remained in the Order then performed the *Uposatha* Ceremony for the first time in seven years.

Thereupon, Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa availed himself of the opportunity to convene the Third Council in order to protect the *Dhamma* and *sāsana* from degeneration and corruption. One thousand *Arahants* participated in the council, which was held at Asokārāma in Pāṭaliputta in the eighteenth year of King Asoka's reign, 236 years after

the *parinibbāna* of the *Buddha*. Venerable Moggaliputta Tissa was the presiding *Thera*, and it was he who was responsible for the composition of the *Kathāvatthu-Pakarama*, which was then incorporated into the *Abhidhamma* as the seventh book. ■

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